الاعتدال
Al-E'Ti'daal
Al-E'Ti'daal Fi Maraatibur Rijaal
Also Known as
"Islamic Politics"
By
Sheikh-ul-Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya رحمه الله
DARUL-ISHAAT
Karachi-Pakistan.
nmusba.wordpress.com

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Assalamua’laikum

I found this book highly beneficial for myself, so I thought it should be brought online so that the brothers and sisters who cant get access of this book can benefit from the book, as the book deals with all the major issues we are facing today around the world.

Hope it would benefit us inshallah.

Note: Though good effort was taken to bring this book error free, still some errors might have crept in, I would like the readers to kindly bring those errors to my notice through this mail: abdulquddus_09@yahoo.co.in

Jazakallah.

Md. Abdul Quddus

FOREWORD

Muslims everywhere are going through a period of uncertainty, turmoil and suffering. Throughout the world, there appears to be a concerted effort to wipe out the very presence of Muslims. Bosnia, Somalia, Algeria are the better known examples of this onslaught, but Muslims are under attack in many other countries. Kashmir, Cambodia, Burma are examples.

In South Africa, too, Muslims live in uncertainty. The country is experiencing a period of lawlessness and anarchy. There is an undermining fear of the future. Questions abound:
"What should we do?"
"Should we vote?"
"Whom should we vote for?"
"Why don't we get guidance from the Ulema?"

Islam does provide an answer, but the answers for Muslims are different from the answers for non-believers. The causes for the elevation or degradation of Muslims are not the same as they are for non-Muslims.

A student of Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Hazrat Maulana Zakarriya Saheb, asked seven questions. Hazrat Sheikh's reply was publised in a kitaab "Al-Eti'daal Fe Maraatibur-Rijaal". This kitaab not only provides answers to the problems we are facing, but serves as a guide according to which a Muslim's life can be conducted.

It should be read and re-read. It should be studied carefully, so that full benefit can be derived from the advice and guidance of Hazrat Sheikh.

May Allah Ta'ala fill the graves of all our pious elders with noor, particularly the grave of Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Hadith, (Rahmatullah Alayh). May He grant them a high place in Jannat and may He create in our hearts true love for Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). May He make all of us think of and live our lives for the ultimate end i.e. success in the Aakhirat. Aameen.

Shabbir Ahmed Saloojee
Principal: Darul Uloom Zakarriya.
Ramadaan 1414
February 1994

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Dearest Brother,

Assalaamu Alaykum. Your kind letter reached me.

It gave me great pleasure to note with what sincerity and deep feeling you express your thoughts. The type of questions which you posed, are quite frequently put to me.

Generally, I reply in a concise manner. This could possibly be as a result of incompetence but on the other hand it could also be because I am extremely busy.

This time however, because of your sincere intentions and special relationship with me (and the importance of your question), I have decided to write the replies in considerable detail. I advice you to seclude yourself and pursue this letter with close attention. Do no confine yourself to reading it merely once, but do so repeatedly with thought and reflection.

Because of the special relationship that you have with me, I am sure that you will definitely go through the contents more than once. It is only as a precautionary measure that I saw fit to appeal to you to cut yourself off from feelings of sadness, anger, passion and prejudice, while reading with an open mind. Should my words make sense to you, then please accept; otherwise there is no compulsion upon you to do so.

As I understand the contents of your long letter, the gist of it consists of the following points:
(a) Although Maulana Thanwi and Maulana Madani are both saintly personalities of high character, how is it that between them there exist such deep differences in (political thought)? How can there be such deep differences between the saints of Allah?
(b) Who in your opinion is on the right path and with whose views do you find yourself in agreement?
(c) What should we do? Why is it that you do not side with any of the parties?
(d) Today the Muslims are being crushed, overwhelmed and destroyed. What should they do?
(e) Selfish personal matter play a great role in peoples actions and intentions, and it seems as if everyone is following his own desires.
(f) We see that the dignity of the UIema is purposely being destroyed and on every front we hear them being criticized and abused.
(g) Through the differences of the UIema, the Ummat is suffering great loss.

These points seem to be the gist of your letter. These very same points are continuously being written and talked about. For this reason I feel that even though greatly troubled by the same, I shall now proceed to answer your queries in some detail. I am not saying that whatever I shall write will be the exact truth and the correct replies. What I am in fact saying is this, that in my humble opinion, I see matters thus: And the Real True Knowledge is only with Allah (Wal Ilmu Indallah).

Question 1:
How is it that Maulana Madani and Maulana Thanwi, although both being such saintly personalities, can have such differences of opinion?

Answer

Let it be known that it is not unheard of to find differences of opinion among the true and sincere saintly ones. There have always been such differences and there always will be. However, there is no need for anyone who has acquired Islamic Knowledge to be surprised at the fact that Ulema can differ. As for me, I am unconcerned about these differences. During the month of Shawaal, our class lectures commence and finish in Rajab of every year. During the course of these ten months, hardly a day passes when the lecturer does not say at least twenty times: "Regarding this masala, such-and-such an Imam believes this, whereas such-and- such an Imam holds a different view." "The Sahabas are of this opinion, whereas among the Tabi'een there are such-and-such differences of opinion."

If we held the opinion that disagreement is a sign of lack of sincerity, it would cause us great anxiety and confusion because it would mean (May Allah forbid) that those saintly persons (May Allah be pleased with them all) will be excluded from the ranks of the saintly ones, just because they differ!

As for the disagreement being of tremendous depth, I say that I do not consider the differences to be strong at all. All I can say is that the present political situation causes temporary disagreement. One person's view is that joining the Muslim League is beneficial for the Muslim Ummat and that to join the Indian National Congress is to their disadvantage, the other person on the other hand believes sincerely that the opposite is true.

Now, it is the duty of every man of sound opinion, who looks at the present situation and understands it, while bearing in mind the tenets of the Shanat, to choose the path of that person whom he honestly and sincerely considers to be following the better path. As for him who is not well versed in these matters, he should stay in the presence of these persons for a couple of days. Thereafter, whomsoever of the two he feels himself drawn to most strongly, he should follow.

بِأَيِّهِم اِقْتَدَيْتُمْ اِهْتَدَيْتُمْ

"Whomsoever of them you follow, you shall find guidance."

There is definitely no need for any fighting or arguments.

Now I ask you: Why do you consider their disagreement to be so deep? Can this disagreement be worse than what we found at the Battle of Jamal, which had to be settled with swords on both sides? Tell me: Which of the two factions at Jamal (Sayyidina Au on one side and Sayyida Aysha on the other) will you exclude from the ranks of the true Saintly Ones? Can you? When the name of Sayyidina All is mentioned, we say: "Radiyallahu anhu i.e. May Allah be pleased with him." He is the rightful Khalifa, the fountain head of the saints. When Sayyida Aysha's name is heard, we also say:

“Radiallahu anha.” She is the mother of the faithful, the most beloved of the consorts of Sayyidina Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasaflam).

Their disagreement was of such a nature that the Battle of Jamal will keep it alive and fresh in our minds until the Day of Qiyamat. Listen to me. Because I consider myself to have sufficient right over you, I want to tell you in very strong terms: Do not ever harbour in your heart any evil whatsoever against any of these two saintly ones. If (May Allah forbid) you bear any malice against any of these two stalwarts of Islam, you will not harm them in the least, but would only do yourself untold harm. I am very much surprised and exceedingly perturbed at the actions of some persons who utter undesirable words against any of these two elders of ours. In fact, I envy these two elders. They are continuously busy with their great work in the service of the deen, for which they are well-rewarded. On top of that they also receive the good deeds of those who attack and backbite about them. It is as if those backbiters, who make themselves guilty of character assassination, are saying to these elders: “Because I am angry at you for the stand you take, you may as well also take the reward of all the good deeds that I have carried out.”

What an injustice this man is doing to himself, by giving his righteous deeds to him with whom he is angry! In this manner the critic becomes the real indigent one, the real evil doer.

مَا تَعُدُّوْنَ الْمُفْلِسَ فِيْكُمْ قُلْنَا مَنْ لَامَالَ لَهُ قَالَ لَيْسَ بِذٰلِكَ
وَلٰكِنَّهُ الَّذِىْ يَأْتِىْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ بِحَسَنَاتٍ وَيَأْتِىْ قَدْ ظَلَمَ هٰذَا أَوْ
شَتَمَ هٰذَا وَ أَخَذَ مَالَ هٰذَا وَلَيْسَ هُنَاكَ دِيْنَارٌ وَلَادِرْهَمٌ فَيُعْطَوْنَ
مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهٖ وَلَاتَفِىْ فَيُؤْخَذُ مِنْ سَيِّأٰتِهِمْ فَيُطْرَحُ عَلَيْهِ

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once asked the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu): “Whom amongst you do you consider to be bankrupt?” They replied: “He who has no possessions. ‘ Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “No that is not so. The real bankrupt one is he who will appear before Allah on the Day of Qiyamat with righteous deeds, but he had acted unjustly to this one, had sworn at and degraded that one and usurped the possessions of another. On that day money will be of no avail. Those whom he treated unjustly will be given his good deeds. And when that will not suffice, some of their evil deed will be cast upon him. “(Majma-ul-fawa-id).

On that day, judgment will be according to one’s righteous and sinful deeds only. Hence in return for one’s injustices, one’s good deeds will be ceded to the unjustly treated ones. And even if these had all been used up, justice must still be done. For this reason, their evil deeds will be cast upon the unjust one. In this way even the sins of others can be loaded on him.

It fills me with great astonishment that people can set about deriding and degrading the saintly elders and praise the efforts of the unbelievers! Such people should take note of the Hadeeth:

إِذَا مُدِحَ الْفَاسِقُ غَضِبَ الرَّبُّ وَاهْتَزَّلَهُ الْعَرْشُ

“When a fasiq (evildoer) is praised, Allah is angered and the Throne trembles”

By this I do not mean that none should ever be praised. It is a completely different matter as to who should be praised, to what extent and under what conditions. What I want to say emphatically, is that the elders should never be degraded and that none should be praised with complete disregard for the rules of Shariah. I ask you: If for argument's sake, a fault or misjudgment has been made on one side; does it necessarily mean that one should close one's eyes to all that person's fine qualities?

Our noble Shariat had taught us every minor detail of our lives and deen. But it seems that we, in spite of claiming to be followers of the deen, pay no attention to it. Others follow our principles and prosper, while we are busy discarding our great treasures and suffering great losses.

Listen to me: I accept (for a moment) that one of these sides are in the wrong, which may even be open and clear error -which you find yourself unable to accept. Well, do not accept. Who is forcing it down your throat? But in this respect, I would very much like you to remember the words of Sayyidina Ma'az bin Jabal (Radiallahu anhu), what a wonderful principle he explained as he addressed one of his students:

وَأُحَذِّرُكُمْ زَيْغَةَ الْحَكِيْمِ فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ يَقُوْلُ كَلِمَةَ الضَّلَالَةِ
عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ الْحَكِيْمِ وَقَدْ يَقُوْلُ الْمُنَافِقُ كَلِمَةَ الْحَقِّ قُلْتُ لِمَعَاذٍ
رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ مَايُدْرِيْنِيْ رَحِمَكَ اللهُ أَنَّ الْحَكِيْمَ قَدْ يَقُوْلُ كَلِمَةَ
الضَّلَالَةِ وَأَنَّ الْمُنَافِقَ قَدْ يَقُوْلُ كَلِمَةَ الْحَقِّ قَالَ بَلَىٰ إِجْتَنِبْ مِنْ
كَلَامِ الْحَكِيْمِ الْمُشْتَهِرَاتِ الَّتِيْ يُقَالُ لَهَا مَا هٰذِهٖ وَلَايُثْنِيَنَّكَ
ذٰلِكَ عَنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَّهُ أَنْ يُرَاجِعَ وَتَلَقَّ الْحَقَّ إِذَا سَمِعْتَهُ فَإِنَّ عَلَى
الْحَقِّ نُوْرًا

"I warn you against the error of the wise one. For sometimes the Shaitaan Utters through the tongue of the wise one a word of error and the hypocrite sometimes speaks a word of truth."
The student asked: "May Allah have mercy on you sire, if such is the case, how will I know when a wise one occasionally speaks a word of error and a hypocrite a word of truth? How will I know what is false and what is truth?" Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Be careful of such statements about which is being said: "What kind of statement is this? How can he have said this. "Do not allow such words to turn you away from the wise man. It is quite possible that he may have recanted or retracted from the statement. Then you may find the truth when you hear it. For the truth has light in it."

Now let us ponder over the important points mentioned by Sayyidina Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu):

a. In the first place he tells us that not everyone speaking a word of truth is necessarily a wise man. A hypocrite also does that. This shows that just because one had heard a word of truth from anyone, one should not become an ardent follower of his. We people have a habit of becoming ardent fans of such people after sometimes merely having heard one speech by him or after having merely read one single article by him. Then on the basis of that single speech or article we tend to praise him to high heaven. And worse than that: Sometimes we are

aware of the fact that a certain person is irreligious and acting in a sinful manner. Yet, because he utters such words which are in agreement with our desires, we try to prove him to be a deeply religious personality of saintly nature -so much so that (May Allah forbid) we bring him even near to prophethood. If occasion comes along when he says something in disagreement with our wishes, we bury him down below. The result is that about the very same person we will one day shout: "Zindabad! Brave! Long may he live!" And the next day we will shout: "Murdabad! May you die! Death to you!" Is this not similar to the case of "waking up as a believer and going to bed at night as an unbeliever" as is mentioned in a Hadith?

b. Secondly Sayyidina Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu) says that it is possible that a wise man may sometimes utter a word which may be an error and lead astray. Hence after merely having heard a person one or two times, one should not become an ardent adherent. What is needed is that the actual facts and circumstances should first be ascertained, pondered over and considered. If, in the majority of affairs he is found to be a follower of the Shariat and a sincere follower of the Sunnat, then undoubtedly he may be accepted as a guide.

Then, if after full investigation, some derogatory thing or unacceptable statement is attributed to him, it should not be accepted. In such a case do not become separated from him. It is quite possible that (having held that view) he may retract and recant. Otherwise you will be cut off from him for always.

This, in short, is what Sayyidina Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu) said. There is much scope for meditation in his statement. Now let us look at our present situation and judge. What do we generally do? We have some thought in our minds, which may be quite insignificant and of minor detail. When we hear anyone speaking and uttering something which agrees with our preconceived idea, we start to heap praises on the speaker, offer our complete support and assistance and are even prepared to consider any serious acts of his which are against the Shariat to be insignificant. This is indeed injustice. It should have been such that his good points be praised and that his evil deeds be condemned. Or at the very least, silence should be expressed at his evil. But here even his evil is being considered to be of minor importance and even justified! At times it goes so far that those rules of Shariat which he transgresses are being looked upon as being nonsensical and absurd! That is not all. We find that even regarding Salaah, which is one of the major pillars of our deen and which has, in numerous Ahaadeeth been mentioned to be the distinction between faith and disbelief, such words are being said and written, that to repeat them here fills me with revulsion and anguish. Just because our hero does not perform Salaah, Salaah becomes jeered and scoffed at, and a mockery is made of it.

Then on the other hand, if we find anyone mentioning anything against our ideas and wishes, we go so far as to consider his every action as being blameworthy. Even their outstanding saintly qualities become degraded in our eyes.

The Shariah and sound logic demand that everything should be put in its own rank and category, from where it should neither become unduly elevated nor relegated.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said:

أَنْزِلُوا النَّاسَ مَنَازِلَهُمْ

"Keep people in their proper ranks of respect."

It is most unfortunate that in most things nowadays we swerve from the path of justice and resort to excesses.

Now, even if I do accept that the differences in opinion between these two holy men are of a serious nature, then it should be borne in mind that according to the Ulema the differences of the elders is not something which lowers their dignity and not against the Shariat. And furthermore, when there is any difference among the Ulema, then to the same degree that these differences will be, so strong will be the arguments on both sides. The deeper the differences, the more forceful the type of argument they will bring forth.

For example: If one Imam considers something to be compulsory while another considers it as being prohibited, then the arguments (on both sides) will indeed be very strong and forceful. Similarly if one Imam considers something to be Waajib (obligatory) and another looks upon it as Makrooh Tahrimi (extremely abominable) then the arguments (on both sides) will also be quite strong arRd forceful and even harsh in nature. It is this which had caused even the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu) to come to blows on the field of battle. According to Abu Dawood, one Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) is reported to have said Witr Salaat is Waajib. To this another Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu), whose researches brought him to a different conclusion said: "He lies". On this point the Ulema had reinterpreted the words of this Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) in view of the fact that outwardly it would appear to be an attack on the integrity of a Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu). Although we translate his words more lightly, it will still remain that this is the word-for-word literal translation of what was said. However it is our duty that when in any matter of truth such words are uttered, which appear rather harsh, we should translate it with care so that one appear to be attacked. There are numerous examples of this in Hadeeth literature. These Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu) are excused for their occasional (seemingly) harsh words because Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said:

أَلَا لَا يَمْنَعَنَّ رَجُلًا هَيْبَةُ النَّاسِ أَنْ يَقُولَ بِحَقٍّ إِذَا عَلِمَهُ

"Listen! Fear of people should never ever prohibit a man from speaking the truth when he knows it." (i.e. the truth)

While Sayyidina Abu Sa'eed (Radiallahu anhu) reported this Hadeeth, he started to weep and said:

"We have seen many things and the fear of people had prohibited us from speaking."

Furthermore there is another Hadeeth:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ
لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذٰلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ

"Whomsoever from amongst you should see any evil being committed, he should stop it with his hand. And if he is unable to do so, he should then stop it with his tongue, and if he is unable to do so, then wich his heart. And this (latter) is the weakest degree of faith."

There are many more texts like this one, which we ha e already quoted in our booklet: “The Virtues of Tableegh.” These are the commands which caused these elders to speak out when they considered something to be the truth. And the more serious they considered the matter, the more they insisted on their standpoint and the more they were prepared to hit out against their opposition, it should, however, be borne in mind that he who hits at his opposition should be fit to do so. Not everyone has the right to do that. The idea of expressing your view vigorously in opposing someone is not something which should cause any perplexity or anxiety. However, it is my sincere heartfelt wish and earnest prayer that all the Muslims and especially those who are our elders, should unite and agree on the best politics for the future of the Ummat. This will surely bring about a certain amount of discomfort and hardship, because no scope will remain for the entertaining of divergent views.

On the other hand it may bring about a situation where the followers and adherents of one elder will not attack, abuse and criticize our other respected elders. It will also entail that non-existent faults of these saintly personalities and attacks on their character will end. This type of situation will save us from loads of sin through backbiting.

Let me once again remind those who set about speaking evil of the saints, of the words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِطَعَّانٍ وَلَالَعَّانٍ وَلَافَحَّاشٍ وَّلَابَذِيٌّ

“Never is a believer one to defame others, neither to swear them nor given to be obscene in tongue.”

سِبَابُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فُسُوْقٌ وَّقِتَالُهٗ كُفْرٌ

“Swearing any believer is iniquity and to engage him in battle (fight him) is disbelief”

يَامَعْشَرَ مَنْ اَسْلَمَ بِلِسَانِهٖ وَلَمْ يُفْضِ الْاِيْمَانُ اِلٰى قَلْبِهٖ لَاتُؤْذُوْا الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَلَاتُعَيِّرُوْهُمْ وَلَاتَتَّبِعُوْا عَوْرَاتِهِمْ فَاِنَّ مَنْ يَّتَّبِعْ عَوْرَةَ اَخِيْهِ الْمُسْلِمِ يَتَّبِعُ اللّٰهُ عَوْرَتَهٗ وَمَنْ يَّتَّبِعِ اللّٰهُ عَوْرَتَهٗ يَفْضَحْهُ وَلَوْ فِيْ جَوْفِ رَحْلِهٖ

“0 you people, who had accepted Islam by tongue, and into whose hearts true faith had not yet reached, do not cause any harm to the Muslims, neither defame nor embarrass them, nor set after them, searching for their faults to ekpose them (to ridicule). For verily whomsoever follows his Muslim brother to expose his faults, Allah shall set about exposing his faults, And when Allah follows anyone in this manner, him shall He disgrace even f he is in complete seclusion.”

Advice for unity

I have an idea of how this unity of purpose may be acquired. One manner, in which this may be achieved, is that men of understanding who are fully conversant with the conditions and problems and who are fully acquainted with the demands of Shariah should come forward. These men, who should also be tolerant, patient and forebearing, must come forward to hold extensive talks with both parties, listening and explaining the true situation and seek a proper solution. Insha’Allah at some time or other, the

disagreement will disappear. Those who are not able to do this, should, like myself, feel sorry for their inability. But, as for swearing and heaping ridicule on these elders, this is not a permissible act for the general Muslim public. We have already quoted the authentic Hadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

سِبَابُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فُسُوْقٌ

"Swearing any believer is iniquity..."

This Hadeeth has been reported by eminent Sahaba like Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood, Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah, Sayyiddina Saad, Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mughaffal, Sayyidina Amr bin Al-Nu'man and Sayyidina Jabir (Radiallahu anhum) (See Jami-ul-Sagheer).

Now, in using disgraceful, insulting language against the saintly elders, what are those people doing except this that they do themselves a great disservice, thereby bringing themselves to the brink of self-ruin and destruction.

Verifying the friends of Allah

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said that Allah says:

مَنْ عادىٰ لِيْ وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ اٰذَنْتُهٗ بِالْحَرْبِ

"I declare war on anyone who causes any hurt to any of my saintly friends."

Now think for yourself, who can ever be successful in this world when he had engaged Allah in combat? We are not even mentioning what loss he will surely suffer in the Hereafter.

The contents of this Hadeeth have been repeated in numerous Ahaadeeth in different wording. This clearly shows that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had said the same thing in different words on various occasions in order to stress the point. The wording above is that taken from a Hadeeth by Hazrat Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) quoted in Bukhari Shareef. The same has been reported by Sayyida Aysha, Sayyida Mymoonah, Sayyidina Ma'az, Sayyidina Anas, Sayyidma Abu Ama'mah, and Sayyidina Wahb bin Munabbah (Radiallahu anhum).

In some of these reports Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said that Allah says: "Whosoever troubles any of my saints has declared war against me." According to other reports the wording is: "Whosoever degraded any of my saints has proceeded in battle against Me." (See Fathul-Bari)

Once Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu), on entering the Mosque of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in Medina. saw Sayyidina Ma'az bin Jabal (Radiallahu anhu) sitting near the grave of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) weeping bitterly. Hazrat Umar inquired of him: "0 Ma'az what causes you to cry?" He replied: "Verily I had once heard the inmate of this Holy grave say something and it is this saying of his which brings me to tears (as I fear for myself)." I heard him say "Even doing something for a little show is also a form of shirk (idolatry) and whosoever shows enmity to any of Allah's saints, has entered into battle against Allah." (Mustadrak of Haakim).

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said that Jibraeel (Alayhis Salaam) had reported that Allah says: ‘‘whosoever insults or slanders any of My saints has come forth in battle against Me. I am so angered at attacks on them that in their defence I am like an enraged lion (looking for revenge):’ (Durr-Manthoor)

What a dangerous affair to attack the elders! Where will there be any refuge for him who has to face Allah in battle? If, in punishment, it is a matter of merely losing an arm or leg, or an eye or having an ear cut off, then it is still an easy matter. The war-monger would have come off very lightly for these are worldly setbacks and with regard to the setbacks of the world one may still hope for repentance and forgiveness. But if the result of our acts leads to such results as loss of faith and irreligiousness, then what can ever be done?

The Ulema say that for all the sins a man may commit, none has been considered tantamount to a declaration of war against Allah except this one (of insulting and degrading the saintly elders), and of taking interest. Against these two alone does Allah declare war. This definitely shows how grave these two sins are. There is even fear for these people of coming to an evil end outside Imaan.
(Mirqaat ul Mafaateeh - Commentary of Mishkaat ul Masaabeeh).

The author of Mazahir Haq also wrote that Allah’s war against a person is an indication of that person coming to a bad ending. For a Muslim to find himself coming to a good ending (on Imaan) is a tremendously, non-passing bounty from Allah. Now you may ponder by yourself how dangerous will be that deed which can cause a bounty to be lost.

In this book Jami-ul-Usool Shaikh Ahmed (Rahmatullah Alayh) wrote: “The act of insulting and the use of derogatory words (language) against those saintly sufis who are the true followers of the Sunnat and destroyers of bid’at (innovations) and especially those elders who are possessors of the Beneficial Knowledge of Islam and performers of righteous deeds, and bearers of the Knowledge of Allah, is indeed a grave and dangerous act which inevitably leads to self destruction and severe loss. Grave warnings have been given in this regard. it is indeed a dangerous practice. It is a sign of the perpetrator’s heart being turned away from Allah and it is a sign of the heart being filled with diseases. There is a real fear of such a person coming to a bad ending.”

Having written this, Shaikh Ahmed (Rahmatullah Alayh) discussed the same sinful act in great detail. Unfortunately we have not the space to repeat his words. In any case, I once again advise and warn all these who have any sort of relationship with me and I will continue to warn them that under no circumstances should they bear any malice in their hearts against any of the saintly elders and Godfearing servants of Allah. Otherwise they should have no connection with me. Even my late father (may he rest in peace) also stressed this point.

The most learned Shah Abdul Aziz (Rahmutullah Alayh), in writing his tafseer of the Quran, came upon the verse:

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا وَّكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

“That was because they sinned and exceeded the limits.”

In his commentary on this verse, he wrote: “The Jews received courage for their disbelief and for killing the Prophets through continuous disobedience.”

“It was only after continuous disobedience of the Prophets that the Jews finally scraped together enough courage for actual rejection of the Prophets. This disobedience grew within them step by step, gradually becoming a fixed habit and so they began to exceed the limits in all sins. Finally it reached the stage where sinful acts began to look good in their eyes with the result that those who came to preach to them against such sins were considered as their enemies. The Prophets continued to urge them against evil and earnestly sought that they change their ways. These Prophets were considered archenemies and thus the Jews killed them. Such is the consequences of sin. It changes one’s outlook and one’s very nature and belief. For this reason the Ulema of Tariqat laid great stress on the avoidance of sin because as one malces a habit thereof, it gradually becomes such that one looks upon it as something praiseworthy, enjoyable, and nice, so much so that anyone or anything which seeks to stop it. is looked upon with scorn, resentment and hatred. The result may even be that it leads one right into kufr (disbelief-rejection of faith).”

For this reason there is a famous saying of the sufis:

مَنْ تَهَاوَنَ بِالْآدَابِ عُوْقِبَ بِحِرْمَانِ السُّنَّةِ وَمَنْ تَهَاوَنَ بِالسُّنَّةِ عُوْقِبَ بِحِرْمَانِ الْفَرَائِضِ وَمَنْ تَهَاوَنَ بِالْفَرَائِضِ عُوْقِبَ بِحِرْمَانِ الْمَعْرِفَةِ

‘Whosoever purposely and scornfully underestimates any Islamic ethics, is deprived of hidayat to follow the Sunnat. And whosoever looks lightly at the Sunnat is deprived of the hidayat of performing the obligatory duties. And whosoever looks lightly upon the obligatory duties is deprived of Knowledge of Allah.”

This goes to show the danger of undermining any of the minor details of Shariat. One should never scornfully consider anything of Shariat to be of no consequence or of no importance. Now, the respect and honour that is due to the sainly elders is one of the major etiquettes of Islam. How can one consider it as being unimportant? And when it is such a thing that can lead to being deprived of the obligatory duties of the Shariat and even to kufr, you can well imagine how dangerous this affair is.

People often look upon sin lightly and treat it as if it is completely unimportant. They to not understand that each part of the deen is so closely connected and inter-related to the rest of the deen that one part supports and relies upon the other. Hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “When people adopt any bida’t (innovation) Allah removes one Sunnat from among them which never ever returns to them till the day of Qiyamat.” (Mishkat).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “When Allah decides to destroy any people, he first of all removes from their hearts all shame. And when they become shameless, you will see them become hateful and disliked in the eyes of people. When

this happens, honesty will disappear from them and they will become deceitful till they will openly commit acts of dishonesty and deceit. And when they had reached this stage mercy will be removed from their hearts and they will not show any mercy to other creatures. When they had reached this stage they will become rejected and accursed in the sight of people. And when they had reached this stage you will see the rope of Islam will fall off from their necks."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Whosoever causes hurt and injury to the heart of any Muslim, has hurt me. And whosoever hurts me, has hurt Allah."

(Jami-us-Sagheer).

Just imagine what a grave warning! If one harms any ordinary Muslim, it is tantamount to having caused hurt to Allah. How much more grave is the situation if the unjustly harmed person is a true saintly Muslim?

Allama Sha'raani (Rahmatullah Aiayh) writes in his book Tabqaat-al-Kubraa: "Imam Abu Turab (Rahmatullah Alayh) who is one of the sufi elders said: 'When a person turns his heart away from Allah, he gets as his companion the habit of criticising and degrading the saints of Allah."

A persian couplet: چوں خدا خواہد کہ پردہ کس درد میلش اندر طعنۂ نیکاں برد

When Allah desires to disgrace and expose the evil minded one, He fills his heart with evil thought against the saintly friends of His.

Shaikh Abul Hasan Shahzaly (Rahmatullah Alayh) one of the greats among the sufis, says: "The saintly elders of Allah had always been troubled by those who degrade and criticise them. Some of these critics have been those who outwardly professed love and devotion to the saints but regarding some saints we hear them say: "How can this one ever be considered a wali (saint)?" In this way they seek to deny that person's sainthood. Now, I ask you, can that person who is completely unacquainted with sainthood (and its demands) deny the sainthood of anyone?"

The Shaikh wrote further: "Some sufi saints remain out of the public's eyes for this reason that they mix freely in the circles of the rulers and the rich. Now the critics find opportunity to criticise their actions by saying: "If this was really a saint, he would have secluded himself and remained drawn into Ibaadah, and the quest after knowledge and the spread thereof." If this critic was really serious about the welfare of his deen, he would first, before criticising, have asked himself this question: "Is this man, who associates with the rulers and governors, meeting these people for his own selfish ends or for the sake of fulfilling some deeni need? Is he not perhaps doing it for the welfare of all Muslims or with the purpose of rectifying some wrong? There are also times when it is compulsory for the saints and elders to approach the ruling class and the wealthy and when it would be prohibited for them to stay aloof from them." (Tabqaat).

At this stage you must please understand one more thing. Sometimes it does happen that saints take revenge on their critics. Such revenge often leads others to further criticise them with the result that people begin to think that these people are just like ordinary

people who become enraged and led by their emotions. This is not so. Often this revenge is for the good of the critic himself.

Hazrat Mirza Mazhar Jani Janaau (Rahmatullah Alayh) wrote in his “Makaateeb” that it so happened that a certain woman once openly insulted Shaikh Abdul Ahad, the father of Shaikh Mujaddid (Ahmed Sirhindi). The recpected Shaikh was forebearing and remained silent. At that moment the Shaikh (with his spiritual eye) saw the wrath of Allah about to descend upon this woman in revenge. He immediately commanded a person to give this woman a smack. However the person hesitated in confusion. The woman fell down dead.

There are many similar incidents in the lives of the saints. I have already written that to be punished like this for insulting Allah’s friends, is to come off lightly in comparison to what could happen.

Shaikh Au Khawas (Rahmatullah Alayh) - another of the famous saints - writes: “Save yourself from even lending out your ears to that person who (without any sound reason accepted by Shariat) criticizes and raises objections against the sufi elders. Keep yourself away from him so that you unlike him do not become degraded in the sight of Allah, in which case you are bound to be taken hold of by Allah’s anger and displeasure.”
(Tabaqa-ul-Kubra)

Love for the saints

Shaikh Abul Fawaris Shah bin Shujah (Rahmatullah Alayh) says: “No Ibaadah is better than to have love for the saints of Allah, because love of the Auliya is a sign of being loved by Allah.” (Nuzhatul-basateen).

Hence I earnestly beseech and advise you to love the Auliya dearly. I sincerely hope that you will accept this advice of mine.

Persian couplet:

O my friend beloved, harken to my advice;
For the righteous youths,
Consider the advising words of the elders
More precious than their lives.

In numerous reports Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “A man shall be raised up (after death) in the company of those for whom he bore love.”

A certain Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): 0 Messenger of Allah, a man loves a certain group of people, but unfortunately cannot reach up to them (in deeds or to meet them). How shall he be? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “A man is considered to be of those whom he loves.”

Another Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): “When will Qiyamat come?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “What have you prepared for that day that you are so eager to know of its coming?”

He replied: “I have nothing except that I love Allah and His Rasool.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) then said: “You will be with those whom you love.”

Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu) said that on hearing this Hadeeth the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) became so filled with joy and pleasure as nothing else would have pleased them. (Mishkat)
This report has been quoted numerous times in those sections of books where love for the friends of Allah is advocated and where warnings are given against friendship with irreligious folk. To have love and good conditions with the ahlullah is a thing most valuable, which will benefit us here and in the Hereafter.
Align yourself to the sleeves of the saintly ones, And have no fear;
For what fear is there for him.
who accompanied Nooh in the Ark.
Persian couplet:

Cultivate devotion for the friends of the Lord
Befriend them and fear not at all.
For what fear is there for him.
Took refige with Nooh in the Ark.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “The likeness of a righteous companion is like a person with musk on him. Even if one does not acquire thereof you surely do smell the fragrance. And the likeness of an evil companion is like a person holding a smoking furnace. Should any sparks fly, it will burn the body or clothes and even if the sparks do not fly around, then still the smoke and smell thereof will reach you.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

Hazrat Luqman the Wise once told his son: “0 my Son, sit in the circles of the righteous ones and through that you will join in receiving righteousness. Never set foot in the circles of the evil-doers for there shall be no righteousness to which you may reach. And should any wrath or punishment descend upon them, you will be a recipient thereof.”

(Durr Manthoor Vol. 5 no. 164).

Therefore, I say, stay away from the company of the evil-doers and look upon the company of the saintly ones as an opportunity of great value. The company of those saintly ones is the cause of spiritual progress and good deeds.

However be warned, that just like we make a definite distinction between what is real and artificial, and between truth and falsehood, so also should we here watch out so that we are not deceived by pseudo-saints.
Persian Couplet

“Many are the Shaytaan appearing in the form of Adam, the Nabj, So take care that you pkice not your hand in the trust of everyone.”

Should you make the mistake of looking upon evil as good, you will be doing yourself a great disservice. Be careful indeed! The criterion to judge a true saint from a false one lies in the teachings of the Shariah, and how these are being acted upon. When a person’s

beliefs are correct, free from shirk and bid'at (innovations) and he is conscientious and punctual about his Salaah, Zakaah, Fasting as well as all the rest of the commandments of the deen, he may be looked upon as being a righteous man. But no man, by acting contrary to the tenets of the Shariah can, in any .way, ever become a saint. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said:
"None of you will ever be able to be a true believer until such time that he moulds his passions in accordance with that (religion) which I have brought." (Mishkat)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said: 'The best of you is that person, whom, if people see him, Allah is remembered, and from whose words an increase of knowledge is effected and on seeing his actions a desire for the Hereafter is acquired." (Jami-us-Sagheer)

Therefore it is of the utmost necessity that before a person attaches himself to any allegedly saintly personality as a mureed, he should take a careful look at the facts about the 'master' in order to ascertain his devotedness and diligence in his obligations to Shariah. One should never become a mureed of such a person about whom it is not known for sure whether he is an ardent follower of Shariah or not. Similarly, one should avoid becoming attached in allegiance to such a person whose actions and spiritual devotions one is completely unaware of. But then, on the other hand, it is unfair to pass judgement against anyone on the basis of hearsay evidence. One should avoid attacking anyone or criticising him merely on the grounds of rumours flying about.

Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu) reports: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) advised me: '0 son, if it is at all possible for you not to harbour any malice in your heart against anyone, then do so. This is my path. Whosoever loves my path, loves me and whosoever follows my path will be my companion in paradise.' (Mishkat)

QUESTION 2:

Q2: Whose view in your opinion is correct and what is your opinion in these matters?

The second question of yours is so meaningless in my opinion, that it does not deserve an answer. Did you ever ponder over the great knowledge of these two great saints, their virtue, righteousness and fear for Allah, their honesty and abstinence, their nearness to Allah, their yeomen service in the cause of Islam? What is there in this humble person of mine that will ever allow me to place myself in their category? What right have I that I may judge between them as to who is right and who is wrong?

Listen! It is only possible for any person to sit in judgement on two parties before him, if the judge has the capability of being able to judge or to arbitrate. Then also it is necessary to listen to the full exposition and explanation of both sides and thereafter to weigh the arguments of both sides. It would also be necessary for cross-examination and to listen to objections raised by both sides against each other and to hear clarification by both sides. This will surely lead to answers upon answers. Then finally it has to be decided whose

arguments carry more weight. After all this it would perhaps be possible to form a sound opinion.

Now you must first of all bear in mind that my position is such that under no circumstances am I ever capable of conversing with any of these two great men (Maulana Thanwi and Maulana Madani) on their level. And if for argument's sake I am considered to be capable of conversing with them as their equal (which I am not) then what right have I to judge them? My position is such that even if I should put forward any well-thought-out opinion and any of them should say it is incorrect, I will have to accept their decision, rather than bring forth counter-arguments.

Sometimes I am struck with amazement at those who are uneducated, or who, having perhaps read some newspaper or other, or having written one or two articles in some newspaper, are now proceeding to criticise these two great personalities — such personalities who are giants of knowledge.

Always should you bear in mind that for anyone to be able to reject or criticise another, it is necessary first to hear the correct version of his views with his proofs and arguments. It is the height of folly to jump to conclusions against anyone without even understanding what he says. In such a case we are like that monkey who found a piece of ginger laying somewhere and all of a sudden looks upon himself as a greengrocer.

Among the signs of Qiyamat, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) mentioned:

"The fact that each one with an opinion considers his opinion the best".

Today we see this in its true form. Everyone thinks that what he thinks is the correct thing to the exclusion of all others, irrespective of what the elders may say and of what an experienced man of wisdom may say.

Ponder over this! Hazrat Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Thanwi graduated in 1301 A. H. and has from that day until today 1357 been busy with teaching the words of Allah and the word of His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). For that full period he has also been spiritually training himself and others. Yes, for more than half a century he has spent his life in teaching Fiqah, the Holy Quran, Hadeeth and studying. Now this great man has spent so much time in meditation on deen, has spent so much of his life in working out the secrets of the Quran and the deeper intricacies of Fiqah, how is it that today his well-founded opinion is such that every Tom, Dick and Harry can consider it nonsensical? Can that ever be a wise thing?

Now let us look at Hazrat Ameerul Hind Sayyid Hussain Ahmad Madani. In the year 1316 he graduated as an alim. Since then he has continuously been busy teaching and benefiting the Ummat, in academic as well as in spiritual spheres.

For several years he had spent his life in the company of his elder and mentor Hazrat Shaikhul Hind Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan from whom he acquired great proficiency in mystic teachings. Then also a large part of his life was spent in the political struggle

against the British Imperialists and for the good of India's Muslim populace. In this regard he had to spend a considerable number of years in jails both inside India as well overseas (as for example on the Island of Malta in the Mediterranean sea).

Now I ask you, are these two personalities such that anyone can compete with them as far as the outlook for the future is concerned? Are they such that any inept person can find faults with their opinions, or attack the wisdom of their suggestions? And how can one like myself find that courage, one whose opinion is of no consequence and who is a mere novice in their presence? My position is such that when today I see the names of these personalities written on notices posted up everywhere and what is written about them, I become filled with anger and surprise asking myself:- "What has happened to this world? What new trend is this that respect and honour for the saintly ones has completely disappeared from this world?"

If it should be such that the learned and educated ones should say something about them, there still is some scope and it would not be so bad. But what do we find? The critics are those whose knowledge and expertise is limited to writing an article or two in some newspaper or other. And the language they use! They use such language which an angry elder would not deem fit to use against a child. Seeing these things I cannot but express my strongest surprise and disapproval.

Take very careful note of this advice of mine: Speak only and pass judgement only on those things about which you know all the pros and cons. It is only possible to make a decision between any two parties once you have thoroughly acquainted yourself with the arguments of both. When, however you notice in any of the two that is in any way against Shariat, then do not give consideration for any of them, because anything contrary to Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is completely unacceptable. In fact there is even no permission to any adherent of one of the four mazhabs to go against the verdicts of the jurists of old.

There are sometimes cases where different persons made different deductions and reached different answers to questions from the same verses or Ahadeeth. In such cases the texts lend themselves to different interpretations, which mean that both sides are followers of the text. In such cases it would be foolish for any critic to jump to conclusions against any side. Here one should be very careful of accusing anyone of acting contrary to Shariah and I Want to warn you most sternly against attacking any elder and against being hasty in jumping to conclusions against any of them. Reach your conclusions only after careful consideration of the facts, deep thought and meditation. Otherwise, as far as possible avoid speaking against them in any way.

Sayyidina Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu), the Ummayad Khalifa who is sometimes called Umar the Second, in discussing the dissent and differences among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) said something very explicit:

تِلْكَ دِمَاءٌ طَهَّرَ اللّٰهُ أَيْدِيَنَا مِنْهَا فَلَا نُلَوِّثُ أَلْسِنَتَنَا بِهَا

"From the blood that was shed there, Allah has kept our hands clean. Why should we now smear our tongues with it."

They were more honoured and exalted beings than us.

It is possible that it may be said that those were the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu). They were more honoured and exalted beings than us. How can we compare others to them? To them I answer. Yes, correct, but the speaker is Umar bin Abdul Aziz. He is an eminent Tabi'ee of high rank. And he is the one who refuses to indulge in attacking them. (If he has not the right, how can we have it?)

The story of Nabi Musa Alayhis Salaam and Khidr Alayhis Salaam is mentioned in the Quran and is a very well-known story. Risulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "May Allah have mercy on Moosa (Alayhis Salaam). If he had remained silent, he would have learnt so many more wonderful things from Khidr (Alayhis Salaam)."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said: "Nabi Isa Alayhis Salaam said: 'There are three types of cases. One is that where the guidance is clear cut, follow it. Second is that type of case where the falsehood thereof is quite clear. Avoid it. The third case is that wherein there is doubt. Refer such a case to the experts in that field."(Tabrani).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said: "He who is very hasty and so bold as to pass verdicts is also bold in taking the path towards hell." (Daramie).
Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) said: "He who is prepared to give an answer to every fatwa asked of him is a mad person." (Daramie).
What Jbn Masood (Radiallahu anhu) meant is that many questions are being asked regarding needless and meaningless things. And is often these days. The object behind the asking of fatwas is often not to gain knowledge or to know how to act accordingly, but rather to disgrace someone or to stir trouble against another. Hence in such fatwas one should take all the precautions. Sometimes questions are framed in such ambiguous terms that to give answers in such cases can be quite bold or even foolish.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once said: "The permissible is quite clear and the prohibited is quite. clear, In between lies numerous doubtful things." In such doubtful things one should take all precaution.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said:

إِذَا وُسِّدَ الْأَمْرُ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ فَانْتَظِرُ السَّاعَةَ

"When affairs are placed in the hands of such people who are incompeten1t (of carrying out the responsibility), then await the Hour of Doom." (Bukhari).

Likewise is the case when incompetent ones begin to sit in judgeiflei'it on eimnent Ulema: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "It is also a sign of the coming of Qiyamat when knowledge is being sought from people of the lower ranks of the learned."

My aim in quoting all these Ahadeeth and the sayings of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) is to explain that in those things where no clear injunctions exists in Shariat, (but have to be deduced from texts) -one should never be hasty in rejecting the true Ulema when they reach certain conclusions. Especially is it necessary for the ordinary man in the street to hold his tongue against eminent Ulema. On the other hand I agree that those who are the equal of the Ulema, have a right to differ from them.

When there is anything emanating from them which is against the Shariat, then certainly the word of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is our guide.

لَاطَاعَةَ لِلْمَخْلُوْقِ فِيْ مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ

Let there be no obedience for any man in those things which is in transgression against the Creator."

Now listen carefully! The question before us now is the welfare of Islam and the best interest of the Muslims. Everything else in this dispute (between the Shaikhs) fall under this. In this respect we have a few major principles:

اَلْأُمُوْرُ بِمَقَاصِدِهَا وَالشَّيْءُ الْوَاحِدُ يَتَّصِفُ بِالْحِلِّ وَالْحُرْمَةِ بِاِعْتِبَارِ مَا قُصِدَلَهُ

"All affairs are judged according to the object that has to be attained. Hence a thing is considered to be permissible or prohibited according to what is intended to be attained."

يُتَحَمَّلُ الضَّـرَرُ الْخَاصُّ لِدَفْعِ ضَـرَرٍ عَامٍ

"Personal harm to a specific person should be tolerated in the interest of warding off harm affecting the general public."

مَنِ ابْتُلِيَ بِبَلِيَّتَيْنِ فَلْيَخْتَرْ اَهْوَنَهُمَا

"Whoever is caught between two calamities (of different dimensions), should choose the lesser of the two.

اِذَا اِجْتَمَعَ الْحَلَالُ وَالْحَرَامُ غُلِّبَ الْحَرَامُ

"In that matter in which there is an aspect of halaal and haraam the haraam will take precedent over the halaal (the matter will be regarded as haraam)."

There are other principles apart from these. Now to deduce the correct path of action from these general principles is never the work of every ordinary man- in-the-street. It is not the work of every novice faced with our present situation to correctly deduce what is permissible and what is not. Who can he loolishly bold and even irreligious as to proceed to give fatwas when he is unacquai J with the general principles of deen, unlearned in the texts of Holy Word and their limits? Does anyone think that by merely having read some translation of some verse of the Quran or some Hadeeth, he can st issuing religious decrees?

Our present dispute falls under these principles. The object is dual, i.e. general welfare of Islam and the Muslims and, on the other hand, saving the Muslims from all deem harm and loss. Both these great Shaikhs have this as their major objective. And so it should be. Everyone of the Muslims should have this as their aim that not even the lowest of Muslims should be made to suffer any form of harm. So how can anyone ever believe any of these saintly souls to be oblivious to the welfare of the Muslims?

In this present situation of the Muslims they follow one of two paths. Both are not without danger. This is admitted by all. Now'the question is: Which path is more dangerous and along which path is there less danger? Which evils can be borne and tolerated and which are such that they cannot be borne With patience? Along which path is there danger of suffering only personal harn and what harm is of a general nature affecting all Muslims. We may liken these two Shaikhs to the drivers of vehicles, who have to drive their vehicles to Makkah. They have a choice of two roads. Both are dusty, swampy dirt roads with highway robbers lurking along the way. There are certain dangers and risks on both roads. The question to ask is: Which road is less hazardous and which road is more likely to lead o the destination? Along which road is one more likely to fall into a swamp and get stuck? Along which road is there the stronger possibility that some local governing authority may arrest the traveller and thus not allow him to move forward or return?

Now in such a case, while there being differences of opinion, if one driver should reckon that there is a stronger possibility of reaching the destination by going along a certain path, while considering the other road to be fraught with certain danger, what has this driver done that is wrong? What other respon sibility is there on him when he had reached this conclusion after careful thought? What guarantee can he possibly give that the road will be free of all dangers or that it will most surely lead one to the required destination? Think for yourself! These drivers are all the times of their lives busy repairing the roads and thinking of ways to do so. This is their greatest concern: How can the convoy reach its destination safely? Are these drivers to be praised or is it our duty to blame them and insult their integrity? Are they such that they deserve all possible help and co-operation or that their paths should be made even more difficult by casting more and more obstacles in their paths? And those who cause difficulties in their path, are they not by their abuse and denouncement of their guides, busy endangering the religious beliefs and faith of their brothers and the entire Ummat, or are they benefiting them in any way?

Let me repeat: The person who after proper thought and consideration and after making use of his vast experiences, considers one path to be less hazardous and more likely to lead to his destination has the right to choose that path. But let me also ask: How can this possibly be justice that when another experienced expert and man of insight chooses another road, he should be abused, degraded and denounced?

The choice before Muslims in India

You know for a fact that for well-nigh fifty years there have been two views of what Muslims in India should do. On the one hand there are those who hold the view that, seeing that Muslims in India form a minority, they should join forces with the other communities in the political struggle of India. Should they remain aloof from the vast majority, they will never be able to acquire the desired results of the struggle for independence and self-determination. These people also know full well that in joining forces with the rest, they will have to compromise somewhat.

On the other hand are those who are of the opinion that in view of the prejudice and one-track mindedness of the Hindus, the Muslims will surely have to suffer tremendous religious and secular losses if they join forces with the Hindus and even then there is no guarantee of them reaching their sought- after destination. For this reason they believe the Muslims should wage their own separate and independent struggle.

My saintly elders have always had differences of opinion and have always been divided on these two issues and still are. Both these theories are noteworthy and merit thought in their respective places. None of the two can be said to be definitely and categorically wrong. In such a case is it not then necessary that a person should adopt that view which, in his mind, seems most favourable and in which there appears to be less harm - the lesser of the two evils? Is it then not necessary for him to advise his friends and adherents to do likewise? If, on the other hand, another way presents itself, which lies between the two extremes, should not such a path be pursued on condition that such a driver or guide comes forward to take passengers along that path?

It fills me with disgust that because of some dissent in our ranks we become so worked up and thereafter resort to denouncing and insulting such great personalities whom we look upon as our leaders and guides. Now, I ask you, if the leaders of a people are such as we claim them to be when we denounce and criticise them in newspapers and speeches, then, does not the condition and description of the followers of. these leaders become quite clear and self- evident? What we actually are doing, by insulting and degrading our elders, is to announce and openly advertise our own inability, weakness and foolishness. What a sorry state of affairs that those beautiful qualities which once belonged to Muslims are now being discarded by them and are being adopted by others! Today in spite of tremendous diversity among our enemies unity has been forged. There is respect for each other's opinion, and even though openly they show mutual disagreement, we find them in secret consultations. Now look at us.

For us, being ardent followers of a great man and being supporters of his and of his party means that we must be involved in a Constant battle against his opponents, insult and jeer at them, whereby in actual fact we do great harm to ourselves. We only rejoice and cheer when the opposite party suffers setbacks and disgrace, even though in the interim our own image is degraded.

In contrast to that I do not want to bring examples from the early days and the golden era of Islam or the early saints. I have heard some stories of the leaders of our family from the recent past. When any court-case took place in connection with ownership of land, they used to go to the courthouse of Kerana, which was about five or six miles from Kandhla. Both parties used to travel to court in the same cart. Should the one party harness his bullocks to the cart first, the other would also go along with him.

I have also heard a strange story about one of these incidents. There was once a lengthy court case between two close relations, It went on for a long time and in the meantime the respondent passed away. It so happened that the plaintiff in the case sent a message to the widow of the deceased saying: "The dispute was between my brother and myself. You

were a young relative of his and as such are a young relative of mine as well. I have no quarrel with you. I am despatching the documents to you. I shall accept whatever you decide and propose (regarding the land)."

This is a story of something which took place in this very age wherein we live. It is a story of people of the world - not saints. Do those who today claim to be religious minded also do this? Can they not also behave like this? How *nice* would *it* be if today our efforts were directed towards construction and not destruction.

QUESTION 3

What should we do? Should we lay ourselves down and die? Why do you not join any side?

Answer

To die does not lie in the hands of men. Its time is appointed by Allah and it shall not come before or after its pre-ordained moment. The committing of suicide is absolutely prohibited. If anyone commits suicide he destroys his chances of success in this world as well as in the Hereafter. For this reason I most strongly advise you not to even allow such foolish words as: "Should we die?" to pass over your lips.

The life of this world is short. During his lifespan man should perform righteous deeni work for himself. Let it be known that man was especially created for deen. If, during his life, man neglects to perform such useful deeni work, then what is the difference between himself and four-legged animals? If it is just a question of eating and drinking, then surely those animals far surpass him because they can consume so much more than him.

Returning now to your question; it consists of two parts, one concerning myself and the other concerning yourself. And this last part can also relate to (a) the scholars and (b) the general public.

This brings us to a three-part question demanding a three-part answer.

(a) As far as I am concerned, you are completely correct that as far as possible, I try to avoid joining any side. Do not think I consider this a virtue on my part. No, I look upon it as my weakness and incompetence. Hence this is not something which deserves any special attention. If because of this anyone rebukes or reproaches me, he is quite justified in doing so. It is not something to be proud of. Actually this is something to do with my inborn shyness and the way I was brought up. It stands to reason that a person virtually acquires the characteristics of the way in which he was reared in childhood. This is the chief reason why the Shaikhs have always insisted that children should become closely associated with the deen and its teachings so that the deen becomes second nature to them. And this is also the reason why Sayyidina Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Command your children to perform Salaah at the age of seven and punish them for not performing it at the age of ten."

We know that a seven year old child is not yet liable and responsible for his deeds (according to Shariah). That is not the point. The point is this that when a child commences Salaah at seven years and makes a habit thereof in his childhood, Salaah becomes an easier task for him to perform throughout his life.

From the age of seven years I was brought up under strict rules that up to age of seventeen I was not allowed to talk to anyone. Neither was I allowed to go anywhere except in the company of my late father or uncle.

So strict were the rules that even in Madrasa, I was not allowed to take lessons from anyone except from two elders. I did not even have the permission to attend the sittings of our elder and the spiritual guide of our elders Shaikh Maulana Khalil Ahmad (Rahmatullah Alayh)-except in the company of my father or uncle, for fear that I may converse with any of the class-mates or with those around me in the sittings. Except for two or three people, I could not converse with anyone. I could not even go home alone. So stringent were the rules that only under the supervision of a few special persons was I allowed to join the congregations for Salaah. If I should relate the happenings of that period of my life, it will read like the stories in “A Thousand and One Nights.” The rules and regulations governing me were such that I was almost like a hardened criminal being kept imprisoned.

However I give great thanks to Allah that He gave me the strength and ability to bear all, the results and blessings of which I am now experiencing in this world.

By way of example, let me quote one instance. It so happened that someone once removed my new pair of shoes from the Madrasa. For six months thereafter there was no need for me to buy another pair for the simple reason that for that whole period of time there never arose for me the need to proceed outside the Madrasa. Jumua prayers used to be held at the Madrasa Masjid. Outside the toilets there is always a pair of old shoes for those in need of visiting the toilet (as is the system today). And as there was no need to leave the Madrasa and so there was no need for shoes. Many similar stories can be told.
The end result of this type of childhood was that today I have a great fear of crowds. For me to attend any gathering is a tremendous ordeal. I feel so much more at ease when I am alone. And when I am in a room with the door bolted, I feel much more secure and happy tIn when the door is left unlocked. Now I ask you, how can such a shy and extremely inhibited person, for whom it is pure agony and an ordeal to be in any gathering, associate with anyone?

Persian couplet:
“The cage is all that we know, so ask us not the path that through the garden winds; For we were snatched from our nest before our hrains started fo function.”

Apart from this there is another thing. In these functions it often happens that the speakers utter such unseemly and bombastic words in their zeal. Accordingly, one finds it in the light of Shariat extremely difficult to keep silent at such moments. If however one should interject and object, it causes disruption in the function. Now these words of these

speakers only seem to be effective when in great enthusiasm they use these unseemly expressions. As for myself, I am a person who feels that extreme caution is required in speech and in the utterance of every word. I study every statement as to whether its utterance is permissible or not.

أَنَا تَئِقٌ وَأَنْتَ مَئِقٌ فَكَيْفَ نَتَّفِقُ

A few years ago I attended a function here in Saharanpur. The speaker uttered such a thing which was absolutely incorrect. The nazim (superintendent) of our Madrasa could not tolerate it and immediately corrected him. The speaker, quite annoyed, accepted the correction saying sarcastically: “This Maulana Saheb says it is like this...”

Thereafter he continued his speech. Maulana Khalilur Rahman Saheb, son of the late Maulana Ahmad Au Muhaddith Saharanpuri was also present. As the speaker again said something wrong, he corrected him after interjecting. Saying “alright, allright”, the speaker continued.

Shortly thereafter the speaker was for the third time corrected by someone whose name I do not wish to mention. The speaker became so enraged that he immediately ended his speech in anger saying: “You people purposely interject and do not want me to address this meeting. You purposely set out to harass me!”

Immediately there was a great uproar in the crowd. The crowd became divided into two factions; one half on this side and the other half on that side. Everyone suddenly began forming their own opinion and giving fatwas in favour of this or that side as arguments raged. Some were in favour of the speaker and some in favour of the critics. The meeting ended on this note of discord with great bitterness.

Similar to this there were quite a few incidents which happened wherein I personally was involved, where the speakers spoke such words which I found extremely difficult to tolerate or re-interpret within the limits of the Shariat. For this reason I fear to participate in any of these functions.

The third point I wish to mention is this: I am involved in such work which is purely religious in nature. Its being such is unanimously accepted. Allah forbid that it shall ever be of the work of those (who in the words of the Quran):

ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُوْنَ صُنْعًا

“Whose efforts goeth astray in the life of this world, while they reckon that they do good.”

May Allah forbid that it shall ever be of the same type as the deeds of those regarding whom Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

رُبَّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوْعُ وَرُبَّ قَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلَّا السَّهَرُ

"Many a fasting person is there who receives nothing from his fasting except hunger. Many are there spending their nights in prayer, who from their prayers receive nothing except having lost their sleep."

Indeed do I fear that when I shall be called to account, then on account of my misdeeds I may be told:

كَذَبْتَ وَلٰكِنَّكَ تَعَلَّمْتَ لِيُقَالَ إِنَّكَ عَالِمٌ فَقَدْ قِيْلَ

"You are telling an untruth. You studied that it may be said of you: 'You are a true scholar. 'And so has it been said..."

However I cherish great hope in view of the verse:

لَاتَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللهِ

"Never despair the Mercy of Allah."

As I have already said, the work in which I am engaged is of a purely religious and righteous nature. None of the seekers after truth deny this. Should I also become involved in other activities there is no doubt that this will surely be a great hindrance.

The Accomplishments of Hadhrat Maulana Madani (Rahmatullah Alayh).

If someone should say: "But how is it that Maulana Madani always engrossed himself in both fields?" To them I answer: Maulana Madani was an exceptional personality and for me even to try and emulate him, would be an impossible task and foolishness on my part. How can I possibly emulate him whose life on journeys and at home was the same, whose hard work by night was the same as by day - a man who felt no need for rest nor ever seemed to tire (after his continuous struggles and hard work). Such a man was he that he would return from Hejaz and disembark at Karachi. From there he would immediately board a train and travel for two days and nights arriving at Deoband at 5 a.m. in the morning then at 6 a.m. he would take his place in front of a class to teach Bukhari Shareef.

This is what happened on his last journey from Haj. How can anyone emulate him? Last year he often travelled hundreds of miles daily for periods of fifteen days on end giving daily lectures in various places. A few years ago he promised to deliver a weekly lecture on the life of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) here in Saharanpur. And true to his promise, for several months he came every week to Saharanpur by the night train to deliver the lecture from after Esha prayers till 1 a. m. Thereafter he would go to sleep and without anyones assistance he would wake up at 3 a.m. From here he used to proceed to the station to return to Deoband and arriving there, teach for a period of three to four hours without a break in-between.

As for me, the final destination of my journeys is most often Delhi, about 100 miles away. A day before departing I am usually alarmed and troubled at the prospect of having to undertake a journey. Then after such a journey, I am usually very tired and fatigued.

This bad effect remains with me for two or three days, so much so that I am unable to teach or write, with peace of mind.

One should also bear in mind that Maulana Madani commenced his lectureship in Medina Munauwarrah. For many years he lived such a life of dedication and devotion that at times he lectured to twelve or thirteen classes daily, sleeping for only two or three hours per day. The rest of his time he usually spent in studying or preparing lectures for the following days classes. This man had been trained in this hard manner till he became so exceptionally proficient. Now, will it not be foolish of me to endeavour to emulate (let alone surpass) a man like that?

Yes, such was his devotion and dedication in the field of knowledge and his efforts in imparting it. Now hear about his spiritual training. He was first trained by that man who is the ocean of love and divine knowledge Hazrat Shaikhul Arab Wal-Ajam Hajee Imdadullah Saheb (may Allah fill his grave with Noor). In the blessed and holy city of Medina, in such a blessed place as the Masjid-e-Ijaabat and under the supervision of his shaikh he devoted himself to Zikrullah for a very long time for the sake of purif'ing himself spiritually. Thereafter the completion and polishing of his training was done under the guidance of Hazrat Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (may Allah fill his grave with Noor). Thereafter for many years his spiritual training reached its pinnacle and maturity under the sympathetic and benign shadow of Hazrat Shaikhul Hind (may Allah fill his grave with Noor) as happened in the seclusion of their exile on the island of Malta. Now I ask. If such a man mixes with strangers and foreigners, what bad influence can they possibly have on him? What harm can any distraction do to him after such training and being under such trainers?

As for me, I am such that even in complete solitude I am not safe and protected against derogatory influences.

How can anyone expect of me to be like him? You know the proverb of the crow who tried to imitate the gait of a swan. The result was that he not only failed but even forgot his own. There is also a famous Arabic saying:

وَكَيْفَ يُدرِكُ الظَّالِعُ شَاءَ وَالضَّلِيعِ

"How can a lame and crippled ox gallop in the manner of a strong and healthy race-horse?"

This is how I am. Those to whom Allah had granted bravery and courage, and who are able and capable, having the necessary time, should definitely spend it in religious as well as political affairs for the general welfare of the Muslims. It is not for them to follow someone as incapable as I am.

Students and Politics

The other part of your question pertains to scholars and students (especially of deen). As for me I consider that, for a student to indulge in any other activities other than his studies,is like taking poison because of the disruption and distraction it causes. It is quite possible that some of my elders may disagree with me most emphatically. It is also quite

possible that what they say in contradicting me, is correct. They being my elders and worthy of respect, my opinion holds no weight when weighed against theirs. However as much as I ponder over this issue, I, in my humble and imperfect understanding, come to this conclusion that students should not indulge in other activities other than their studies. I have reached the conclusion for various reasons. I would like to bring some of these to your notice:

a. We have a well-known saying in Arabic:

سَلِ الْمُجَرِّبَ وَلَاتَسْئَلِ الْحَكِيْمَ

"To know the best way of action, ask the man of experience and not the man of wisdom."

I ask you: Have a good look at the world or at least at India today and see all those Ulema who are masters in various Islamic academic fields and who have made their mark in intellectual progress. Then study their lives as students!!! Today they may be pinnacles of knowledge in any field of Islamic learning but during their student days they devoted themselves entirely and diligently to their studies. On the other hand there will be those who in their student days had been busy with other activities. Even though they are famous and respected today and are considered within the ranks of the Ulema, you will find that their efforts in the field of Islamic knowledge lack depth and they lack insight in Jurisprudence, Ahaadeeth etc. Whenever an unusual fiqah question arises which requires deep insight, vision and academic research, they are unable to arrive at the proper conclusion. We need not argue about the truth hereof and there is no need for me to substantiate my statement. The situation regarding the Ulema of India is quite clear. Anyone casting a look will surely come to know the truth.

b. Among our elders and those before them, lim-Sulook - the Knowledge of attaining purification and cleansing of the inner self through Zikr - has always been a very important part of their existence. For them the acquisition of knowledge and the cleansing of the self for spiritual progress were two items completely inseparable in their lives. However, in spite of considering these two forms of knowledge and training as indispensable, one to the other, all the elders from that time to the present day Shaikhs of Tariqat have all refused to accept the bay 'at (oath of allegiance) of students who are engaged in studies. They refused to initiate students into Tariqat even though they considered this training and discipline of the utmost importance. The reason being that they did not want to cause distraction during the time for studies.

c. My own experiences with students as well as logical observation confirm that it is unwise for students to participate in public gatherings and functions or in processions and shows. Long after these functions are over, students continue to discuss and review these events, arguing about their benefits and advantages. This becomes a distraction from their major objective of acquiring knowledge.

d. When one further considers the social life of students in their hostels and how, in a collective manner, they spend their twenty-four hours, we find that this type of life does not allow the reviewing and discussions of functions and processions to come to an end. In every student gathering, discussions are renewed:' Now, how much time is left for

study, research, revision of work and classes? This is indeed something which occurs daily and no amount of argument can deny the truth.

e. That is not all. Often the result is that these discussions and debates, with students supporting opposite views, lead to disputes, disagreement and quarrels. Whenever a majority favours or adheres to any particular view, they try to suppress the minority who oppose it.
Initially they try to do it by force. If however, this proves unsuccessful they try to lodge false or half true complaints with the rector of the Madrasa

In reply, the other party again brings forth a list of untrue and concocted accusations. Then it is a general occurance that the dominant party is in a position to produce a long list of witnesses to substantiate their accusations, while the suppressed group has difficulty in finding even one true witness for their side of the story.

The poor rector, unaware of the true state of affairs judges according to the evidence, with the result that it often happens that the real culprits go scot-free while the innocent are reprimanded.

These are not mere figments of my imagination. This is what actually happened and still happens quite often. We know that differences of opinion often emerge among the ordinary people as well. They also disagree. But their disagreements are of a temporary nature. Their gatherings are usually confined to specific times and when the function ends everyone returns to his own home. But as far as these students are concerned, this Madrasa is their home. This is the place where they spend their daily twenty-four hours, this is where they reside. Hence if any minor disagreement erupts, it lasts for months and months. Let us look even further.

f. Is there any Madrasa where the teachers are all in agreement over all issues? No! Sometimes two or three may be on this side of the fence with two or three on that side. Sometimes in classes without any relevance to the topic under discussion, those discussions (about which there is disagreement) are raised, discussed and reviewed. The views of those who favour the same opinions are praised while those who differ are criticised most fiercely and even scoffed and jeered at. In this way those holding opposite views are being ridiculed in front of all.

Respect towards Teachers

g. Let us go still further. Often students do not share the views of their teachers. Sometimes it happens that the student who is being praised by the teacher is one whom the students do not agree with and they feel he should be criticised and rejected. There are also times when the student whom the teacher criticised and ridicules is the one whom all the students or some of them hero-worship and support. As a result that the teacher is looked upon by students as one not worthy of respect, full of prejudice and without insight and understanding. Now, if this is the attitude of students towards their teacher, how can they possibly benefit from him?

This is a known fact and as such has always been Allah's decree that he who shows disrespect to his teacher will never be able to benefit from his knowledge. Whenever the great Imams of Islam had laid principles for a proper student - tutor relationship, they most emphatically stressed that students should respect their tutors. The Ulema of Hadeeth even include in their books a chapter on the 'Etiquette of a student", a detailed account of which you will find in the preface of the book "Owjaz-ul-Maalik - Sharah Mu'tai Imam Malik".
In the 'Ihya", Imam Ghazzali (Rahmatullah Alayh) has also discussed it in detail. He writes: "For the student, it is necessary that he should place his reins completely in the hands of his teacher and that he should submit to the teacher in the same way as a sick patient submits to his sympathetic physician."

Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) said: "I am a slave of him who had taught me even a single letter. If he so wishes he may sell me and if he wishes, he may keep me in bondage."

Allama Zarnooji says in his book "Taleemul-Muta-'Allim" ("The teaching of students") "I see many a student who does not acquire the benefits and fruits of knowledge. This is because he fails to observe the basic rules and etiquette of acquiring knowledge. Hence they became deprived in spite of effort."

The same Allama then wrote a complete chapter wherein he emphasized the need for showing honour and respect to teachers. He writes: "Students will definitely not be able to derive benefit from knowledge unless they accord due respect to the Ulema, teachers, lecturers and instructors." Whosoever attained knowledge did so as a result of the respect shown to them and whosoever fell by the wayside in failure, did so because of disrespect... This is also the reason why a man does not become a Kaafir (infidel, renegade, apostate) through sinful acts committed. He does however become a Kaafir through insulting and degrading any part of the deen." How well the Persian Poet says:

From Allah we beseech the grace of re.spectful behaviour
For the discourteous one is indeed deprived of the Grace of the Lord.

And further:
To show respect is a crown granted by the Lord
Adorn the head therewith and proceed where you wish.

There is a further saying:
"Those with respect are fortunate and for the disrespectful there is misfortune."

Imam Sadooddin Shirazi says: "I have heard the saints say: 'When anyone desires that his son should become an Alim, he should show great respect to the Ulerna and be of excessive service to them. If his son does not become an Alim, his grandson will surely become one."

The story about Imam Shansul-aimmah Halwany (Rahmatullah Alayh) is quite well-known. It so happened that he once had to visit a certain village for some special need. On hearing of his arrival all his previous students living there came forward to meet and honour him. One, Qazi Abu Bakr did not appear. Later when the Shaikh met him and inquired as to why he had been absent on that occasion, he mentioned that he had to perform some task for his mother which resulted in him not being able to meet his Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "This man will surely be well-endowed as far as worldly riches are concerned but there will be no benefit for him in his knowledge."
And this is exactly what happened later. It is a famous and true saying among the elders that for serving parents diligently one is increased in wealth. On the other hand, honour and respect to ustads gives increase and depth in knowledge. This is a truth which cannot be denied. But our attitude and behaviour today is something that is clear to all.

When in affairs of politics, students and teachers disagree with one another. We see students resorting to degrading teachers, insulting them and finding all kinds of faults with them. This only serves to deprive them of the benefits of knowledge. It has been my observation and experience that even those students who attend schools for English (Western) education and have to endure the beatings handed out by their masters, make good progress and finally attain high posts in life. We even see that they attain the objectives for which they study. As for those who act arrogantly and with pride towards their teachers, later, in spite of having obtained their degrees, are found wandering all over the place looking for recommendations and testimonials in order to find a job. And when they do find some sort of employment, some mishap or calamity follows them even then.

Anyway, whatever type of knowledge one pursues, one will never be able to attain perfection and progress therein unless due respect is shown to one's teachers and masters. If that is the position of one who does not show respect, i.e. that he cannot benefit, you can well imagine how much more unfortunate is he who opposes and fights his tutors.

In the book: "Adabud-dunya-wad-deen" it is written: "It is most necessary for a student to be in the favour of his teachers and to be servile and humble before them. If they adopt these attitudes they will reap benefit and if they discard it, they will suffer loss and be deprived of beneficial rewards."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "It does not befit any believer to resort to flattering in order to acquire anything except for the acquisition of knowledge."

Sayyidina Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) said: "At the time of seeking knowledge I became humble and for this reason, at the time when others sought me for knowledge I became respected and honoured."

There is a saying of the wise men: "Whosoever does not tolerate humbleness at the time of seeking knowledge, will forever remain in the indignity of ignorance."

h. Further (concerning these disagreements between student groups and students and teachers) the results become even worse and more painful. You will find that the teacher becomes the object of discussion and controversy. In the eyes of the supporters he appears as an angel, so much so that even his faults are considered to be virtues and his every action is put forth as a proof and argument of correctness. On the other hand, in the eyes of his critics and opponents, he is looked upon as not being worthy of being an ustad, not fit even to teach. Neither has he the required capability and qualifications, nor are his lectures logical and understood. Even his virtues and good points are resented, and every action worthy of criticism. They even stoop so low as to search for his faults and defects and, where none exists, defects and vices are fabricated against him. Then these are advertised all over in an organised manner according to plan.
Now, I ask of you: Are not these the true state of affairs about which those connected with Madrasas are aware? Can those in charge of Madrasas deny it?

i). Here is a recent incident of a certain Madrasa. A group of students while having their meals in their room were discussing the question whether the decision of the majority was binding upon all at all times and under all circumstances or not. At first, it was merely a discussion. Later it developed into a hill-fledged debate which led to a vehement quarrel. The result was that soon a fight took place with sticks and shoes as weapons. Is there a Madrasa where a warden can stay with the students twenty-four hours of the day like a shadow in order to oversee that conversations remain within bounds at all times?

j. Here is a similar incident of recent times of a certain Madrasa. Some Madrasa students attended a function. Later it so happened that they expressed their opinions about the events of the function. Again it resulted in a debate, with two parties holding opposite views. One group started to threaten the other. Then one day the one group locked a student from the opposite party in a room and beat him to such an extent that he almost died. These are daily occurances - not merely fairy tales or what may probably happen in the distant future.

k. Another point to bear in mind is that the purpose for which the guardians had handed over their children - the students - to the authorities of the Madaaris is solely for the acquisition of knowledge. Even though many of the parents themselves belong to some party or other, they lodge complaints when they are informed that their children at the Madrasa are involved in the same. Many letters expressing concern about this are in the possession of Madrasa authorities. Some of them even state emphatically: “It is true that politics and political discussions are part and parcel of our family’s life. If they remain with us for just a short while they will quickly come to know all the ins and outs, pros and cons of it. However at this stage, our objective in keeping them in the Madrasa is only for them to acquire a strong background of knowledge.”

Next we come to the question of whether such monies that were given for the propagation of knowledge can be utilized on such students, who take part in activities outside their planned program of study. The donors provide these money as scholarships for those who seek knowledge. I admit that there are surely some who have no objection to such scholarships and bursaries being granted to politically-active students as well. On

the other hand, there are also those, who, if they should discover that their donations are being utilized for financing political activities or that students involved in political agitation are receiving bursaries out of their donations, will most definitely not tolerate such a situation. There are in fact those donors who stipulat that such students should not be financed from their grants. Is it then not necessary that in view of this, that special precautions thould be taken in the expenditure for such students? Teachers who are paid out of donations and grants to the Madrasa. and spend some time in such nonmadrasa activities can, under the rules of Shariat, still compensate for such loss by working overtime. This will make up for the loss, but can the students say the same?

These are some of the reasons which I have penned down by way of examples to substantiate my case. If one ponders over the matter there will be more scope t,r further discussion.

Imarn Ghazzali (Rahmatullah Alayh) writes in the Ihya-ul-Uloom: "There are numerous rules and regulations governing the behaviour of a student. Of these rules, ten are more essential. Among these is this one, that, while seeking knowledge. he should not occupy himself with any activities other than his studies. The student in search of knowledge should travel to a distant place far from his hearth and home so that relatives and the domestic needs of his family do not distract him from his object, because relations with others always tend to divert one's attention from the acquisiton of knowledge." It is a known fact as Allah says that:

مَا جَعَلَ اللهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ

"He has nor created two hearts in the breast of anyone"

Hence we have the well-known saying: "Knowledge does not grant you a small fraction of itself until you give yourself fully over to it."

Inam Ghazzali (Rahmatullah Alayh) writes further: "The heart of the person who keeps himself busy with various activities is like an irrigation canal passing through agricultural fields with its banks not properly raised. The result is that the water flows out of it in all directions. Some of it evaporates and not much is left t benefit the crops in the field."

After all this I must stress something: I must admit that the student group which has no problems and worries is more successful in reaching their objectives. In this present environment and in the prevailing atmosphere around us, there are more dangers and evils lurking about, bringing the possibility of harm and injury. When one has a choice between those affairs wherein there is ilossible harm and those where possible benefit may be had, it is our general rule that the choice should fall upon avoiding those things wherein lies harm.

And so is it (for the student) to participate in the present political agitation. We admit thai there is a certain amount of benefit as well as some harm. And as such with the present political situation continuing to prevail, it is, in my opinion dangerous and harmful until a change takes place in the political climate. If however, some such way can be devised whereby matters can be kept within proper limits, the matter changes.

The Public and Politics

The third part of this question concerns the non-students i.e. those people who are not actively and directly involved in special religious affairs. Certainly they should take part in politics but with sincere motives and with a clear conscience -such a conscience with which they can appear before Allah tomorrow. Such should be their deeds that it can be written in their favour as deeds of righteousness.
(To strive for the welfare of the Muslims is a form of Jihad).
Jihad is most important part of the deen. For this reason anything which serves to raise the Word of Allah is beneficial and necessary.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "To guard the borders of Islam for even a single day is better and more virtuous than the whole world and everything that lies therein. And to proceed in the way of Allah for a short while in the morning or in the evening is better than the whole world and everything therein."

According to another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:
"To stand guard over the borders of Islam for even one day and night is more virtuous and greater in reward than voluntary fasting for a whole month, and more valuable than standing in worship for all the nights of that month. And should death overtake a person while in this duty, it will be a sadaqa-jariya - a perpetually rewarding charity even after death."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Whosoever dies in this state will continue to be rewarded till the day of Qiyamat, and he will continue to receive his sustenance and be guarded against the punishment in the grave. And on the day of Qiyamat (which will be a day of tremendous worry and concern) he will he completely at ease."

Once Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) was standing guard at one such place. Someone asked him: "Why are you standing here?" He replied: "I have heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) say: "To stand in the path of Allah for a short while is more virtuous and greater in reward than spending the whole night in Ibaadah on the night of Laylatul-Qadr near the Hajarul-Aswad."

According to another Hadeeth, we read that the Salaah of such a person is five hundred times better than the Salaah of another. And his spending one dirham in this path is better than another's spending seven hundred dirhams.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "The best of people are two persons: one is he who possesses some cattle, discharging their due rights, while also remaining busy in the worship of his Lord. The second is he who takes hold of the reins of his horse and while on horseback he frightens off the enemies of Allah."

Note that with regard to the first person, it is not an indispensable prerequisite for him to possess animals. The Hadeeth merely seeks to convey that he has a simple livelihood

while he is staunch in Ibaadah. Similarly there is no indispensable condition that he must possess a horse. A horse is mentioned here mainly because of the fact that in those early days Jihad was usually waged on horseback. The main idea that is conveyed by the Hadeeth is to chase away and ward off the enemies of Allah, in whatever way possible.

The following Hadeeth has also been reported by many: “There are two eyes which the fire of Hell will never touch; the eye which stayed open and awake in the path of Allah and the eye which at some time or other wept for fear of Allah.”

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Shall I inform you which night is better than Laylatul-Qadr? It is that night when (in the defence of the deen) someone remains awake at a place where danger lurks, while having no hope of even returning safely to his family.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “On the day of Qiyamat all eyes shall weep, except that eye which remained closed to prohibited things (for e.g., unlawful contact with women), and that eye which stayed awake in the path of Allah, and that eye which ftr the fear of Allah, shed tears the size of the head of a fly.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Whosoever spends in the path of Allah shall be rewarded seven hundred folds. Whosoever assisted any fighter in the path of Allah shall also be considered a Mujahid. And he who looks to the welfare of the family of a Mujahii is also a Mujahid.”

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “Whosoever assisted any fighter in the path of Allah, or helps anyone who is pressed by debts, him shall Allah keep in the shade of His Mercy on the day on which there will be no shade except the shade of His Throne.”

Further: “How blessed (and fortunate) indeed is that person who even in Jihad remembers Allah profusely. For every word of Zikr he gets the reward of seventy thousand righteous deeds and every righteous deed is multiplied tenfold. And apart from and beyond this will be Allah’s special favour which He will grant him.”

According to another Hadeeth: “Whosoever wept out of the fear for Allah shall not enter Hell until such time that mother’s milk shall return into the breast. And into that nose into which the dust from striving in the path of Allah had entered, the smoke from Hell will not enter.” (This is a clear indication that it will be impossible to enter into Hell).

In another Hadeeth: “The fire of Hell will not touch those feet onto which the dust from the path of Allah had settled.”

In one Hadeeth it is mentioned: “The smoke from the fire of Hell will not reach that face which dust from the path of Allah had touched.”

In one Hadeeth it is said: "Whosoever suffered any wound in the path of Allah, will on the day of Qiyamat be stamped with the seal of the martyrs. His wound will then shine in the colours of saffron, and from it will come a fragrant smell like musk so that all will realize that this wound was suffered in the path of Allah."

On one occasion Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was travelling somewhere with a caravan of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). With him en route was also travelling a young man keeping himself aloof from the rest of the caravan. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked him: "Why are you walking alone on one side?" He replied: "I do it because of the dust which I am trying to avoid." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "There is no need for you to avoid this dust. On the day of Judgement this dust will be transformed into particles of fragrant musk."
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said: "Whosoever shoots one arrow in the path of Allah, whether the arrow reaches its target or not, shall receive the reward of having set free a slave."

Jihad and sincerity

Numerous indeed are the Ahadeeth exhorting Muslims towards striving in the path of Allah, explaining its rewards while also warning against negligence and indifference in this respect. Such is Jihad and Jihad includes every effort towards the elevation and success of Islam and repelling the efforts of the non-believers. Hence every effort with this intention is included in the term, Jihad. Therefore Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The best Jihad is to speak the word of truth in the face of a tyrant ruler." This is so even though the tyrant ruler need not necessarily be a Kaafir. Even if a Muslim ruler is the tyrant, then speaking the truth in his presence is also Jihad. What is however important, is this, that the aim of the striving and effort should be to strengthen Islam.

Someone once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "A certain man goes forth into Jihad with the object of acquiring booty (worldly gain); another so that his power, valour and bravery be displayed and yet another so that he may become well-known for his efforts. Which of these is worthy of being Jihad?
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "Jihad is only that which is waged so that Allah's Word becomes dominant."

In another Hadeeth a certain Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "A man wages Jihad with the intention of acquiring some worldly gain." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "He shall receive no reward whatsoever." Hearing this the Sahaba (Radiallahu anhum) were greatly surprised. They said to the questioner: "Perhaps you did not put your question clearly. Do ask again." The Sahabi again put the same question.
Again Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) gave the same reply. When he asked the question again for the third time, the same reply was given.

One Sahabi (Radiallahu anhu) asked: "0 Messenger of Allah, explain to me the reality of Jihad." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "If you make Jihad for the sake

of Allah and to obtain reward from him, you will be raised on the day of Qiyaniat accordingly and if you do so to show (your strength and prowess) and for fame, or to acquire worldly riches, you will be raised up on the day of Qiyamat accordingly."

In other words, as is the intention of your action, so will be your resurrection.

In another Hadeeth we are told: "Those who make Jihad are of two kinds: One of them is that person who does so, seeking only Allah's pleasure, obeys his Imam, spends of that which he loves in Allah's path, behaves kindly with his companions and keeps himself away from all iniquity. The very sleep and staying awake of such a person brings reward. The second one is that person who does everything for show and fame, disobeys his Imam and participates in all iniquities. Such a person does not even come back from Jihad in the same way as when he went. (In other words his punishable deeds outweigh the deeds earning reward and by the time he returns he is laden with more sins).

Many other Ahadeeth stress this same point. Hence a primary condition is that whatever is done, should be done solely for Allah's pleasure, for the protection of deen and so that truth may prevail. According to the views of saintly men of spiritual experience and opinion, whatever effort is being made with this intention will Inshallah not go unrewarded. Yes, there is absolutely no doubt that it is an indispensable pre-condition of any righteous work that sincerity should be its prime motive and that it should be for Allah's pleasure. We have already quoted that famous Hadeeth about those people who on the day of Qiyamat will first be called to be reckoned with. One will be a Shaheed. Allah will then remind him of all the favours bestowed upon him. He will admit all those favours. Then he will be asked: "How did you make use of these favours?" He will reply: "I have sacrificed my life in Thy path for Thy sake, for that was the most beloved sacrifice in Thy sight." The reply will come: "You have spoken an untruth. You have done so that people may say: 'He was indeed a brave man.' And so it was said, (Your object was reached). People did say: This was a brave man of courage."
Thereafter a command shall be given that he be cast into Hell. Thereafter an Alim (scholar) shall be called to be reckoned with. Allah will remind him too of the great favours bestowed upon him and he too will acknowledge them. Then he too shall be asked as to the manner in which he gave the rights due for these favours. He will reply: "I set out to acquire knowledge, taught people and recited the Quran (and taught it)."
The reply shall come: "An untruth have you spoken. All that was indeed done but, so that people may say: 'This was a grand scholar, a good reciter And this object of yours had been attained for people did say that."

Thereafter a command shall be given that he too be cast into the fire.

Thereafter a wealthy man shall be summoned. Him as well Allah will remind of His favours and he will admit them. And when he shall be asked as to what he had done with these bounties, he shall reply: ''There was not a single avenue of righteousness wherein spending is liked by Thee, wherein I did not spend for Thy sake."

The reply shall be given: “You have spoken an untruth. Indeed you had spent but all was done so that people may say: ‘This is a kind and generous person.’ And so it has been said and your object has been attained.”

The command shall be given that he too be cast into Hell. (Mishkat)

Reports with this same theme are numerous in Hadeeth kitaabs. It is thus of the utmost importance that whatever works of good are done, should be done for Allah’s sake and Allah’s sake alone. There are some such works where the chances and possibility of doing things for the sake of fame and name are more stronger. Similarly, in some fields the temptations to work for worldly selfish gain are more tempting than in others. It stands to reason that where the temptations are stronger, the precautions to be taken by Muslims should be greater.
In the field of political activity there is tremendous scope for boasting about achievements, much praising and cheering for things said and done, that one is greatly tempted to do things for name and fame. For this reason, whosoever enters politics should take special precautions to save himself, so that his actions may be of benefit to deen, and for the security and protection of Islam. His intention should he to save Islam from dangers, to protect Islam from the onslaughts of its non-Muslim enemies and to halt their victory over Islam.

If this is the object of the politician, no one can deny its being a good and righteous activity. Who is there among the Muslims who can deny this or has no desire in his heart that this be done? If however someone is incapable of involving himself, he should then at the very least try in his own chosen manner to assist those who sincerely do this noble work of striving for Islam and the Muslims rather than becoming a hindrance.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Whosoever sends anything to be spent in the way of Allah, while he himself remains at home, shall in return for every dirham. receive the reward of seven hundred dirhams. And if he himself takes part in the path of Allah, he shall for every dirham spent receive the reward of seven thousand dirhams,” (Mishkat)

For this reason, I say that those people who due to some preoccupation or for some religious reason, are unable to take part in striving on behalf of the Muslims, should not refrain from assisting the actual workers financially, physically as well as with the efforts of their pens.

How great is Allah’s grace that even upon the incapable ones, the lazy ones, those lacking in courage and the weak ones, He did not close the doors of His reward. He did not in fact keep those doors closed in any facet of Ibaadah for these categories of people. The fact that we occasionally seek refuge in both valid and invalid excuses to avoid action, is another question.

وَ اللهُ الْمُوَفِّقُ لِمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضىٰ

“And Allah is the giver of the ability to achieve that which he loves and that which pleases Him.”

What is Jihad

At this stage it is necessry for me to stress something else. Note that Jihad is not only that in which battle is waged and fighting takes place, even if that is the highest rank of Jihad. Every effort which is made for Allah's Word and Will to be dominant and for the supremacy of Islam and truth is included in Jihad.

Hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once said, that the best form of Jihad is to speak the truth in the presence of a tyrant king. For this reason every effort in political fields (for the welfare of Islam and the Muslims) is also considered Jihad.

Having said that, I must draw attention to another point.
Undoubtedly those involved in this kind of politics are performing a very important function. But then there are those persons among them who go to such extremes as to criticise, denounce and abuse those who for some personal or religious reason are unable to do the same. The result is that in the eyes of those critics and denouncers every Ibaadah or any other righteousness become ignored.

They go so far as to denounce him as an evil and bad person, and even brand him as an infidel. This indeed is a great wrong. Had this been a compulsory duty on every Muslim, then jn such a case too the one who stayed aloof from it would not have been guilty of a major sin. So how can he be called a Kaafir? Branding anyone a Kaafir without sound proof is indeed a grievous wrong. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said that the root of Islam is based on three things one of which is that a Muslim having accepted the Kalimah should not be branded as a Kaafir because of some sin committed by him. (See Mishkat). According to another Iladeeth: "Whosoever calls another a faasiq or a Kaafir while that person is not so, that accusation returns to the one who utters the word."

"When anyone calls a person a Kaafir or an enemy of Allah, and that person is not so, the accusation returns to the one who utters the word." (Mishkat).

This means that this calamity will fall upon the speaker. One should be very careful of the words one utters. Sometimes one hears a person being very angry at others saying: "The person will never ever be forgiven" or "So- and-so will never receive pardon from Allah." What a great wrong. It grieves me greatly that I have heard this type of words even coming from the tongues of educated people.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "A man said: 'I swear that Allah will never grant forgiveness to such-and-such a person. Allah replied: 'Who is this man who swears by Me that I will not forgive that person? I have indeed pardoned that person and as for this man who swears thus to him I say: All your deeds are nullified and in vain."

According to another Hadeeth there were two persons among the Bani Israel:
One was a great Allah-fearing and saintly person and the other a great sinner. The saintly one always used to admonish the sinner. One day he saw the sinner involved in a great sinful deed. He said to him: "I swear by Allah, there will be no pardon for you by Allah."

It so happened that both of them passed away and both of them were brought before Allah. Allah said to the righteous one: “Did you consider yourself so capable of stopping my bounties from descending that you swore (that I will not forgive him)?”

To the sinner Allah said: “Enter into paradise through My special Mercy.” A command was then given that the saint be cast into Hell. Regarding the saint in this Hadeeth, Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Because of one spoken sentence, he destroyed both his dunya and his deen.” (Jam-uIfawa-id).

The object of quoting this Hadeeth is to show that it is indeed very foolish to allow such words from the mouth even in anger. Worse than that are the types of words uttered which are derogatory to the deen and its teachings: For example: we sometimes hear some say in derision: “There are many doors leading to paradise. The Molvis have made entry into paradise easy. The road to paradise has been made easy. All you have to do is make Salaah and to fast and then go to Jannat.”

These are the types of words with which they seek to play the fool with the deen, and which they openly state in their lectures with great zeal. In this manner they desire to scoff at the deen and the custodians of deen. Whoever denies the fact that paradise has many doors of entry? There are eight such doors according to authentic Hadeeth. According to some other Hadeeth it seems there are even more. There is a special door for Salaah, a special door for those who Fasted diligently, a special door for giving charity and for those who suppress their anger and forgiv others. A special door has been reserved for those who put their complete faith in Allah and rely on Him, and a door for those who were regular and punctual in performing Duhaa Salaah (Chaast). There is also a door for those who make Taubah and for those who are pleased and satisfied with Allah’s will. In fact according to an authentic Hadeeth there is a special door for the people who are regular and punctual in the performing of any righteous deed. (Fath)

So there are indeed many doors leading to paradise. But what is the need for scoffing, jeering and passing sarcastic remarks about it?

Just like other teachings of the deen, Jihad is also part of the deen. Allama Shams stated that to perform Salaah in its prescribed times and with due care, is coijs:dered more virtuous than Jihad. The reason for this is that Jihad is waged for Imaan and Salaah to become established, whereas Salaah is in itself the required object, which is good in its own self.

Then it is a great wrong to criticise those who do not take an active part in certain forms of Jihad and to say that their Salaah and Fasting is of no use whatsoever. A Sahabi once came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) with the intention of going in Jihad. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked him whether his parents were alive, to which he replied that they were indeed alive. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said to him: “Return home and serve them diligently” (Mishkat).

On another occasion one of the Companions (Radiallahu Anhu) came along and said to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): “I have volunteered to go into Jihad and my wife is proceeding for Haj.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Go and accompany your wife in Haj.” (Mishkat, Bukhari, Muslim).

According to another Hadeeth a certain Sahabi (Radiallahu Anhu) came and said to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) “I have come here with the intention of going in Jihad, and would like to consult you in this affair.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Is your mother alive?” He replied: “Yes, she is alive.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Remain with her for paradise lies at her feet.” (Mishkat)

A bedouin Arab came and consulted Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) about making Hij rat. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Hijrat is a difficult affair. Do you possess camels?” He replied: “Yes, I do.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Do you give the Zakaat that is due on these camels?” He replied: “Yes I do.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Then keep yourself busy with righteous actions somewhere beyond the sea. Allah Most High will not decrease the reward of your righteous works at all.” (Abu Dawood).

In short, there are numerous similar Ahaadeth and incidents where Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) gave preference to other righteous deeds over real Jihad, let alone those actions which although not being true Jihad can be construed to be Jihad.

We do admit however, that at times due to urgent circumstances and the needs of the hour, it did happen that the need for Jihad was uppermost, so much so that at the time of the Battle of the Ditch against the Ahzaab, one or more of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam’s) Salaah’s were not performed in their prescribed times. But this is not a general rule that in the absence of Jihad no other deeds of righteousness is acceptable, especially in those cases where acceptable excuses are prevalent.

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) proceeded from Madina while going for Jihad. On the way he said: “You people have left behind you in Madina such people who share with you in reward for every step you take towards battle, for all that you spend and for all the journey you complete, even though they remain behind in Madina.”

In surprise the Companions (Radiallahu anhum) asked: “How can they share our reward though they remain behind in their homes?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “It is because of being preoccupied and due to disability that they are absent.” (Abu Dawood)

The theme of this Hadeeth and what it seeks to convey is also corroborated by countless similar Ahaadeeth. In one Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “Whosoever falls ill or had gone on a journey (as a result of which he could

not perform his usual daily good deeds), will receive the same reward as he would receive while in good health and stationary (not on a journey)" (Mishkat).

According to one Hadeeth: "When that man, who had been usually busy in some good work falls ill, the Angel, appointed to register his good deeds is commanded to continue to write down for him the reward of the good deeds as if he had done them." (Mishkat).

Another Hadeeth states that when any prohibited deed is being performed and someone who dislikes such deeds, had been forced due to cirsumstances taken part therein, he shall be considered not to have participated therein. And he who likes such deeds, even though he was not present there, shall be considered as if he had indeed participated therein. (Mishkat).

Another Hadeeth will shortly be quoted wherein we hear: "Whosoever sets forth with the aim of earning that with which to maintain and support his small children, is in the path of Allah. And whosoever sets forth to help his aged parents, he too is in the path of Allah."

Who is a Shaheed

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) went to visit the ailing Abdullah bin Thaabit (Radiallahu anhu). When he reached there he found him laying silently without speech. He spoke to him but the patient did not answer. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) seeing this remarked:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ

"We are from Allah and to Him we shall return."

"We have been defeated as far as you are concerned (for death which has been pre-ordained has taken you.)"

On hearing this, the ladies of the household began weeping as they realized that death had occured. In a sorrowftil tone the daughter exclaimed: "I had so hoped that you would die a martyr's death because you had prepared the provisions for Jihad."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "He has indeed received the reward for the intentions he had. What do you understand by martyrdom?" She replied: "To be killed in battle in Allah's path." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) then said: "Apart from being thus killed, there are seven other forms of dying a martyr's death:

Whosoever dies of plague dies a martyr; whosoever dies of drowning is a martyr; whosoever dies of pneumonia is a martyr; whosoever dies of an abdominal disease is a martyr; whosoever dies burnt by a fire is a martyr; whosoever dies crushed (under a collapsed roof or wall) is a martyr; whosoever among women dies in giving birth is a martyr." (Muatta Imam Malik)

(Regarding death through abdominal diseases, as stated in the above Hadeeth the Ulema have various interpretations. Some take it to mean dropsy; some say diarrhoea, some say colic and even others say that it refers to and includes every stomach ailment).

According to another version of this Hadeeth, the daughter said that she only knew a shaheed (martyr) to be that one who dies fighting in the path of Allah. Thereupon

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “In such a case the number of martyrs among my Ummat will be very few indeed.”

Thereafter Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) mentioned all these various forms of martyrdom. Apart from these seven forms, there are approximately sixty types of death where the glad tidings of martyrdom had been given in the Ahaadeeth. In the second volume of Oujazul-Masaalik this humble writer has collected them all. It is indeed astonishing that Allah and His truthful Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) are pointing out the causes for the spiritual progress and virtue of the Ummat of Sayyidina Muhammed (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), while at the same time the Ummat themselves (in their attacks upon each other) are narrowing the doors of that special Mercy. It is a common fault today that those engaged in some or other form of deeni activity and effort - whether in teaching, instruction, tableegh, Jthad or sulook i.e. spiritual training - consider those in other fields of deeni work to be wasting their time in things and affairs non-beneficial. Sometimes they do not even hesitate to accuse others of being lost and astray. In this way the religion of Islam, which is so easy has thus been made difficult. In this way they confine all the numerous aspects and efforts of Islamic progress and progressive action to their own kind of activity. Hence it seems as if they have excluded all other deeni effort from the circle of Islam.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “The deen of Islam is easy. Whosoever proceeds to adopt hardness and difficulty therein will be overcome. So walk a straight path therein, following it closely and give glad tidings to the people (for their righteous deeds).” (Bukhari).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Make things easy and do not create difficulty. Give people glad tidings (by enticing them to deen) and do no create in them disgust for deen.” (Durr Manthoor)

The author of the book - Bahjat-al-Nufoos - writes: “Once Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): “What is it that you have been sent with (to all mankind).” He replied: “With reason.” (This indicates that the con’mands of Shariat should be followed together with reason). Here we find in another Hadeeth that on the Day of Judgement rewards will be granted in proportion to reason. (Majma)

Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) then asked: “Who will take the guarantee (for the correctness) of reason (seeing that people vary according to the amount of reason and rational thinking)? “

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Reason has no limits. But whosoever considers and takes the things made lawful by Allah, to be lawful and the things made unlawful by Allah to be unlawful, shall be a man of reason. If he strives further than that, he becomes an ‘Abid - a devoted servant and if he strives still further, he becomes a Jawaad (brave and generous).”

Now if a man strives in Ibaadah and also shows courage in the performance of good deeds, while on the other hand he does not have intelligence to follow and partake of the lawful things and to avoid the unlawful, he is of those whose efforts prove to be fruitless in this world even though they think they are doing good.

It should be well understood that to take something to be unlawful while it has already been made lawful by Allah, indeed shows lack of reason in the sight of the deen.

Similarly when one acts narrow-mindedly in deen or tries to amend or alter the teachings of deen, this also shows lack of reason. Such persons do not act rationally.

The author of Bahjat-un-Nufoos writes: "If a person discerns from himself that his Ibaadah should reach perfection in every aspect, he will be unable to do so for two reasons, one of which is that he will be helpless to do so. Secondly, sometimes, or, rather on most occasions, there will be an accumulation of Ibaadah in which case he will only be able to discharge one of them properly."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

إِنَّ الْمُنْبَتَّ لَاأَرْضًا قَطَعَ وَلَاظَهْرًا أَبْقٰى

"Whosoever tires his animal of conveyance will not be able to cross the distance nor keep his transport animal intact."

The Hadeeth quoted by the author of "Bahjat" is a portion of a longer Hadeeth which has been reported by many Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). Allamah Sakhawi (Rahmatullah Alayh) quotes it as one of the famous (Mush-hoor) Hadeeth. Some other Ulema of Hadeeth have questioned the authenticity thereof. The complete Hadeeth goes like this:-

إِنَّ هٰذَا الدِّيْنَ مَتِيْنٌ فَأَوْغِلُوْا فِيْهِ بِالرِّفْقِ فَإِنَّ الْمُنْبَتَّ لَاأَرْضًا
قَطَعَ وَلَا ظَهْرًا أَبْقٰى

'Verily this religion is a thing most consoli&ited and strong; so walk along its path gently for verily whosoever tires his animal of conveyance, will not be atle to cross the distance (and reach his destination) nor keep his transport animal intact and safe (for flaure journeys)."

Hence in a Hadeeth quoted previously we are told:

فَسَدِّدُوْا وَقَارِبُوْا

"So walk a straight path therein, following it closely..."

In other words: walk at a moderate pace. Do not over-exaggerate the commendable acts of deen, viz, those which are tnandoob or mustahab, to such an extent that the Faraaid i.e. the obligatory acts become neglected.

Once Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) missed Sayyidina Sulayman bin Abi-Hath-ma (Radiallahu anhu) in the masjid for Fajr Salaah. After the prayers he went to the market and in doing so, had to pass his shop. He entered it and said to Sulayman's mother: "I did not see Sulayman in the masjid for Fajr this morning. How is it?"

She replied: “He spent practically the whole night in voluntary (nail) prayers with the result that in the morning he was overtaken by sleep.”
Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: “It is more preferable to me that I perform Fajr Salaah with the congregation than to spend the whole night in Ibaadah.”

What a meritorious act to perform Ibaadah right throughout the night! But on the other hand Fajr Salaah with the congregation is a duty with so much more emphasis. For this reason it was in the sight of Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) much more preferable. There are many Ahaadeeth to the effect that the acts commanded by Shariat have their own special ranks (of importance, merit and preference). Neither is one allowed to elevate any specific act in rank nor to lower it, just because we are involved in it or just because of the ndtion that in our eyes our own type of activity alone is worthy of merit to the exclusion of all others. This type of attitude is greatly unjust.

I am not trying to tell you that one is not supposed to entice, persuade, and encourage others to get involved in one’s own type of activity. What lam in fact saying is that you should never become so fanatic in stressing the importance of your field of work that you exceed the limits. The result can be that corneared to your own field you leave the impression that no obligatory act (Fard), no compulsory (Waajib) act and no excuse will be of any consequence. This should not be the case that yo begin to look upon those who do not involve themselves in your (political) effort as inmates of Hell, irreligious beings, infidels - for this is what I have read in newspaper articles and what has been heard in some people’s speeches. It is quite an astonishing thing that these types of accusations come even from the tongues of high-level personalities and responsible, resepectable persons.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) ‘is reported to have said: “Whosoever spreads such accusations against any man who is in fact innocent of such acts, him shall Allah on the Day of Qiyamat melt in the fire of hell until such time that he proves the truth of his statements.”(Durr Manthoor)

Note that melting here means that he will be burnt in hell so that the blood of his body will turn to blood and pus which will continue to boil and melt. As long as he will be unable to substantiate his accusations with proof, he will not be allowed to leave hell. Now it stands to reason that because he had said something of someone which was not in that person, how will he ever be able to prove it and gain exit from hell? In such a case he will either have to seek refuge with him whom he had falsely accused that that person should show Mercy and forgive him or that Allah in His infinite mercy should pardon him by giving some of his good deeds to that person in exchange. If however this unfortunate soul has no good deeds (with which to barter) some of the unrighteous deeds of the accused will have to be put upon his head.

Whichever way one looks at it, it will be a terrible day of great grief and sorrow. On that day one will have to stand disgraced and humiliated before him, whom yesterday one had abused and insulted.

QUESTION 4
Today the Muslims are being dispersed and destroyed. What should they do?

Answer:
This is indeed true that Muslims are troubled and worried on all sides. Not only are the individuals among them caught up in problems. They are also tremendously worried by collective problems. Now comes the question: What should they do? Such a question from the pen of an ordinary Muslim of understanding surprises me. But even more so when coming from the pen of a scholar of learning.

Islam is that religion which Allah in the Quraan-e-Kareem has described as the Perfected Religion. Further, He had also through it, completed His favours upon the followers of this path.
In a most endearing tone He says:

اَلْيَوْمَ اَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِيْنَكُمْ وَاَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِيْ وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْاِسْلَامَ دِيْنًا

'Today have I perfected for you your religion And completed My favour upon you And have been pleased that Islam be your Deen.(Surah Maida V3)

Here Allah expresses His satisfaction that Islam be the religion of mankind. What a grand medal and what a pleasurable distinction.!

Is it not strange that the followers of such a perfect religion and such a complete way of life should now be in distress as to what they should do? Allah and His truthful Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had not left any minor and major need of the Ummat, whether pertaining to worldly or religious affairs, where in the clearest terms they did not clarify their commands. At all times were the benefits and disadvantages clearly stated. Not only were the orders given and put down in words. No, the Holy Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his devoted followers - the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) - practically illustrated these commands by acting accordingly, and as such had practical experience thereof. In short, let it be known that success in worldly affairs as well as in spiritual affairs is only found in following diligently the example of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), and conforming to it.

However, when we look npon following the Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) as old-fashioned, out-of-date conservatism and consider the Sunnah (his path) as a sign of narrow-minded dogmatism, then I am afraid that our end result in the Hereafter will obviously be failure, whereas the consequences of our worldly affairs are that which we see before us today.

Every single act of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his illustious Sahabah (Radiallah anhum) are registered and preserved in writing through the wonderful services of the scholars of Ahaadeeth. Compare the actions of this Ummah today with the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). You will come to the conclusion that deliberately, insolently practically every Sunnah is being discarded. That is not all. The

Sun- nat is being purposely attacked and vehemently opposed. And those who invite towards it are being called ignorant fools as far as the religion is concerned.

Is there no limit to this tremendous wrong and injustice? If such is the position, what right have Muslims to complain about their present distress? What right have they got for this clamour and outcry in their speeches and writings that Muslims are facing ruin and destruction?

Persian couplet:

"That which we face is of our own doing
No remedy is there for what we cause ourselves (to suffer).

In the clearest terms Allah Ta'aala says:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ
وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ
وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

"Whatever misfortune befalls you is because of what your own hands had earned. And Allah pardons much. And you will not be able to escape in the earth, for, save Allah you shall have no protector or helper."

Allah states further:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

"Corruption prevails over land and sea for that evil which the hands of men had caused; that He may make them taste part of that which they had done, in order that they may return."

(30. 41)

Similar themes are expounded in the Quran not in only one or two places but are stated in numerous places. Regarding the first of the two verses quoted above, Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) says: "Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said to me:
'I shall explain to you the meaning of this verse. 0' Ali! Whatever misfortune befalls you - whether sickness, or any form of torment or any worldly calamity - is because of what your hands had earned.'

Sayyidina Imam Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) says: "When this verse was revealed, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: 'I swear by Him in whose Hands is my life, whatever befalls you, whether it be the scratch of a stick, the throbbing of a vein, the stumble of the feet, or to be struck by a stone is because of some sin on your part.'

Sayyidina Abu Moosa (Radiallahu anhu) says: "Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: 'When a servant of Allah suffers any injury or anything less than that befalls him, it shall be because of his own actions."

Sayyidina Imran bin Haseen (Radiallahu anhu) once suffered from some illness somewhere in his body. People came to visit the patient and expressed sorrow on his behalf. He said: "Why do you express sorrow and regret? This which befell me is a result of some sinful act."

Sayyidina Dahhaak (Radiallahu anhu) says: “When a person forgets the Quran after having put it to memory, it is a result of some sins committed by him.” Having said this he recited this verse (quoted above) and continued: “What greater calamity can there be than forgetting the Quran?”

When Sayyida Asma (Radiallahu anha), daughter of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), had a headache, she placed her hand on her head and said: “This befalls me because of my sins.”

(Durr Manthoor, Ibn Kathir)

It is however also true that sometimes the calamities and ordeals are caused by causes other than misdeeds committed. Hence because of some of those causes the Ambiyaas (who are sinless) and innocent children are made to suffer. However it is not my intention to deal with those causes or possible causes at this moment. Those will be dealt with in their appropriate places. Neither do I wish to discuss all the verses and Ahaadeeth dealing with this topic or to point out all the possible causes. All I am trying to point out is that in the quoted verses and Ahaadeeth a general law has been formulated and that a general cause has been mentioned as the reason for all these misfortunes and calamities that befalls the Ummat. This reason is of such weight and its general effect of such magnitude that at times even those people who are not involved in such sinful activities are adversely affected by it.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “In the latter days of this Ummat there shall be much caving in (of men in their houses into the earth). And there will be transfiguration (and disfigurement of men into the forms of dogs, monkeys and apes). And stones will rain down from the heavens.”

Hearing this, someone from among the Sahabah (Radiallanu anhum) asked:
“0 Rasul of Allah, will destruction come to us even though there are the righteous ones among us?”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: ‘Yes (you will still be destroyed) when much evil and iniquity prevails. “(Tirmidhi)

This Hadeeth clearly shows that when much evil abounds, the punishment from Allah’s side will come in spite of the presence of virtuous people.

Apart from this there is the famous Hadeeth which has been reported in numerous forms: “Continue to command each other towards the good and continue to prohibit each other from evil, otherwise Allah will send down upon you His punishment.”

In some versions of this Hadeeth there is an additional thus:
“At that time (when you stop this work) you shall call upon Allah and He will not answer you.”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “If in any community of people any prohibited deed is being done and they in spite of being capable of preventing it, refrain

therefrom, then before death Allah Ta'aala will involve that (whole) community in some punishment."

According to another Hadeeth, Allah Ta'aala once despatched SayyidinaJibreel Alayhis Salaam to destroy a certain community. Jibreel Alayhis Salaam said: "There lives among them such a saintly being who has not sinned against Thee even once in his whole life. (How can I destroy them all)?" The reply came from Allah: "That is indeed true, but never did a frown appear on his forehead for My sake, and on My behalf."
This means: He never once, on seeing evil committed and disobedience to My commands, exhibit any sorrow or anger. And that was the least that he could have done.
(Mishkat).

It is not easy to mention all the numerous Ahaadeeth with similar themes, namely; that grave warning of punishment is expressed against those who see evil being committed and do not even show any form of displeasure, anger or sorrow. When one is incapable or too cowardly to stop such acts, the least that is expected of him as a Muslim is to show his sorrow and grief.

Now let us examine our own condition in the light of the abovementioned statements, (namely that evil befalls us through our sins and that for failure to stop evil, calamities overtake us.) How numerous are the sins we commit and in view of the theme of the verse and Hadeeth quoted, how much should the punishment and calamities that should fall upon us be? Then let us ask ourselves. How numerous are the sins we see being committed before our very eyes and how much are we perturbed and troubled at these iniquitous deeds? When such is the situation in which we find ourselves, how can our prayers to Allah be answered? How can our problems be solved and our anxieties be eliminated? It is only through Allah Ta'aala's Mercy and through the connection we have with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his duaas for us that we are not all destroyed and completely annihilated.

So bad has it become that we are proud of our evil deeds and we look upon irreligious acts as a form of progress. Such are we that he who blasphemes against Allah Ta'aala, uttering words of Kufr, is considered an enlightened person. When anyone so much as try to stop him or object to his utterances, he is called a bigoted fool, an ignorant narrow-minded opponent, standing in the way of progress - unaware and ignorant of the urgent needs of the times, a spoke in the wheel of progress. Yes, all that for trying to stop the spread of Kufr. How indeed things have changed!

What we have stated above is a general observation. Now by way of elucidation let us illustrate with an example. In this religion of Islam our Salaah is of the utmost importance after faith (Imaan). In numerous Ahaadeeth the discarding of Salaah and negligence in its observance is stated to be leading almost to Kufr. It has also been mentioned that it is the distinguishing factor between Islam and Kufr. In my previous book - Virtues of Salaah - I have already mentioned in short all the deeni and worldly harm that comes as a result of forsaking Salaah. There is no need to repeat all that here. Now, how many are the Muslims who diligently discharge this obligation? Has anyone the guts to admonish those

who neglect or forsake it? The poor Muslim may be admonished and preached to, but will anyone admonish or preach to one of the Muslims of the upper and higher classes? When anyone has some wealth or enjoys a position of power in the government, will anyone dare to try and put him right? Is it at all possible that when this high official is unmindful of this religious obligation that anyone will appear before him in his grand office to admonish him regarding his negligence?

Nowadays we see even worse than this. A man openly and fearlessly states that Salaah is not Ibaadah. Leave aside accosting and admonishing him. You will find those who praise him for such an irreligious statement. Now he is considered a great scholar - an Allamah - the man having the solution to all the ills of the Muslims - one who understands the needs of the hour. Whoever objects to any utterance of his, is an ignorant fool, is an Imam only good for two rakaahs of Salaah, who is completely unaware of the needs of the times.

As far as the Salaah is concerned, it was for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) the "coolness of my eyes". Now we find that one, claiming to be a follower of his, openly calls it a useless practice. And look what happens! He is awarded the medal for the man with depth and vision!

This is what is happening and yet the Muslims are complaining about calamities descending upon them! When such is our situation, then all the calamities that befall us is far less than what we in fact deserve. Surely it is only through Allah's great Mercy and encompassing Grace that we are still left alive on the face of the earth.

That was as far as Salaah is concerned, the one pillar of Islam. Take the others - Zakaah, Fasting and Haj.

Have a look at the Muslims in the world and see how observant they are and how mindful they are. Thereafter take the haraam things. Among those forbidden things is wine. Now look how many of those claiming to be helpers of Islam and fighters for progress openly and without shame consume liquor. And with what cheek!

The Quran-e-Kareem repeatedly warns against it and in clear terms prohibited it. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) expressed a curse upon the drinkers of wine, the brewers thereof, the seller thereof, the buyer thereof, the transporter thereof and him for whom it is transported. He also cursed him who serves it and him who sells it for an income.

In another Hadeeth it is stated that: "Jibreel Alayhis Salaam came to me and said: '0 Mohammed! Allah has indeed cursed wine, its brewer and its transporter and the one to whom it is being transported, and its seller and he who serves it and he who causes another to serve it.'

Both these Hadeeth have been described as correct and authentic by Imam Haakim (Rahmatullah Alayh). It is something to ponder over how many persons are involved in this curse of Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Now consider what will

be the end result of such people who are cursed by Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) - the Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who was so most affectionate and kind, who at all times was most anxiously striving for the progress, success and prosperity of this Ummat! As for those who, in spite of being capable of stopping it, prefer silence, how much different are they from these cursed ones. Then look at the present situation in our midst. Leave aside approaching the drinker to admonish him! If anyone (seeking to admonish) comes along to condemn the act, he is called an old-fashioned, narrow-minded, rigorous Mullah.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Refrain from wine, it is the key to every evil."
Now ask: When we ourselves open the doors of evil with our own hands, why do we complain of evil befalling us? The truthful informer Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) informed us that if you open this door, such evils will be let loose. We have opened those doors and indeed these evils have come into existence. So why do we now cry? Is there any limit to this stupidity?

In a similar manner, let us look at usury. Think with what force and emphasis Allah and his truthful Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had warned against it and prohibited it. So strongly has it been prohibited that from His side and on behalf of His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) He had announced a declaration of war against those refusing to leave it. The Quran says:-

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَأْذَنُوْا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ

And if you do not (give up what remains due to you from usury) then be warned of war against you from Allah and His Messenger. (2.278,279)

During the days of ignorance (Jihiliyyah) there used to be dealings involving usury. Then came the prohibition. Hence this command was given that all those who still had interest due to them should not only not collect it, but should also refrain from taking further usury in new dealings.

What grave warnings against usurious dealings in the Ahaadeeth. According to a Hadeeth reported in many forms and wordings, the taking of interest may be divided into seventy three forms of sin, the least sinful of them being tantamount to having committed fornication with one's own mother, the worst type being to degrade and insult a Muslim.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Save yourself from such sin for which there is no pardon. One of these sins is usury. Those who take interest will appear as mad people on the day of Qiyamat."

It is also reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) cursed him who takes interest, him who gives interest, him who gives evidence on usurious dealings, and him who writes usurious transactions. Now imagine what will be the end result of him who is cursed by Allah's Messenger!

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) says: “The people among whom fornication, adultery and dealings in interest become prevalent (and widespread) have prepared themselves for Allah’s punishment.”

Bearing these grave warnings in mind look now at our dealings. See how many of our business transactions are such that openly and fearlessly involve interest! That is bad enough, but worse than that: we find interest being considered permissible and books and articles written to “prove” its permissibility. When anyone opposes such views and protests, he becomes degraded,insulted and falsely accused. He is vehemently opposed and every effort is made to see that he is not being listened to.
I have now mentioned just two examples of what actually takes place. You may take the rest of the laws and commands of Shariat and ponder over them in similar manner. In all the commands of the Shariat you will find the same negligence, unmindfulness and even open rejection. On the other hand, regarding those acts which are haraam and not to be indulged in, you will find open indulgence boldly, shamelessly and openly. You will hardly find anyone prepared to object, protest and admonish. When such a person is found, the battle and the consequence of his protest is only too clear and obvious.

After giving these examples I now quote a few Hadeeth by way of example from which you may deduce that all our present day problems, misfortunes and sorrows are the result of our own doing. They are not the consequences of the deeds of others.

If the Muslims truly believe that Sayyidina Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was truthful, they should fully understand and accept that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) indeed spoke the truth when he indicated that as a result of certain deeds on our part certain forms of punishment and sorrows will afflict us. They should accept that those forms of punishment will surely come. Do we wish to be saved from those evils? Then we should avoid those evil deeds.

What nonsense is this that of our own free will we jump into a blazing fire and then shout and cry: “We are burning. The flames are consuming us!” How will that help us?

Study the following Hadeeth carefully and ponder: Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا فَعَلَتْ أُمَّتِيْ خَمْسَ عَشَرَةَ خَصْلَةً حَلَّ بِهَا الْبَلَاءُ
قِيْلَ وَمَا هِيَ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ قَالَ إِذَا كَانَ الْمَغْنَمُ دُوَلًا وَالْأَمَانَةُ
مَغْنَمًا وَالزَّكٰوةُ مَغْرَمًا وَأَطَاعَ الرَّجُلُ زَوْجَتَهُ وَعَقَّ أُمَّهُ وَبَرَّ
صَدِيْقَهُ وَجَفَا أَبَاهُ وَارْتَفَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ وَكَانَ
زَعِيْمُ الْقَوْمِ أَرْذَلَهُمْ وَأُكْرِمَ الرَّجُلُ مَخَافَةَ شَرِّهِ وَشُرِبَتِ
الْخُمُوْرُ وَلُبِسَ الْحَرِيْرُ وَاتُّخِذَتِ الْقَيْنَاتُ وَالْمَعَازِفُ وَلَعَنَ آخِرُ
هٰذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَوَّلَهَا فَلْيَرْتَقِبُوْا عِنْدَ ذٰلِكَ رِيْحًا أَوْ خَسْفًا أَوْ مَسْخًا

“When my Ummat begins to do these fifteen things, calamities will descend on them;
When booty becomes private personal property;

When goods entrusted to the care of a person becomes booty;
When Zakctht is being looked upon as a tax (given vety reluctantly); When wives are obeyed and mothers disobeyed;
When friends and companions are treated amicably;
While fathers are treated with scorn and harshness;
When noise is heard in the Mosques;
When uncouth villians become the leaders of men;
When an unfit man is being honoured for fear of the evil that can proceed from him;
When wine is being drunk openly (and boldly);
When silk is being worn by men;
When it shall become a habit to acquire singing girls;
When the use of musical instruments will be common occurance; When the latter of this Ummat shall curse and criticise their predecessors (the Sahabah, Taab 'een and the righteous Aiemma-e-Mujtahideen), then await red dust storms, earthquakes, caving in of the earth, transfiguration and the raining of stones from the heavens".

وَعَنْ أَبِيْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا اتُّخِذَ الْفَيْءُ دُوَلًا وَالْأَمَانَةُ مَغْنَمًا وَّالزَّكٰوةُ مَغْرَمًا
وَتُعُلِّمَ لِغَيْرِ الدِّيْنِ وَأَطَاعَ الرَّجُلُ اِمْرَأَتَهُ وَعَقَّ أُمَّهُ وَاَدْنٰى
صَدِيْقَهُ وَأَقْصٰى أَبَاهُ وَظَهَرَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ وَسَادَ
الْقَبِيْلَةَ فَاسِقُهُمْ وَكَانَ زَعِيْمُ الْقَوْمِ أَرْذَلَهُمْ وَأُكْرِمَ الرَّجُلُ مَخَافَةَ
شَرِّهِ وَظَهَرَتِ الْقَيْنَاتُ وَالْمَعَازِفُ وَشُرِبَتِ الْخُمُوْرُ وَلَعَنَ اٰخِرُ
هٰذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَوَّلَهَا فَلْيَرْتَقِبُوْا عِنْدَ ذٰلِكَ رِيْحًا حَمْرَاءَ وَزَلْزَلَةً
وَّخَسْفًا وَّمَسْخًا وَقَذْفًا وَاٰيَاتٍ تُتَابِعُ كَنِظَامٍ بَالٍ قُطِعَ سِلْكُهُ
فَتَتَابَعَ

In another Hadeeth Hazrat Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "When wealth of the Baytul Ma shall be considered as private property:
When wealth left in trust becomes booty;
When Zakaah begins to be regarded as a tax;
When knowledge is acquired not for the purpose ofdeen; When a man shall obey his w(fe and disobey his mother;
When one shall draw near to friends and disassociate himselffrom his father; When voices shall be raised in the Masjids;
When the evil-doer among a tribe shall hold responsible positions of power over them;
When low villains shall be the leaders of men;
When an unfit man shall be honoured for fear of the evil he may cause; When musical instruments shall be openly used;
When wine shall be drunk and when the latter ones of this Ummat shall curse and criticise the predecessors, then await red dust storms, earthquakes, caving in of the earth, transfiguration and the raining of stones from the heavens."

In the third Hadeeth the contents are basically the same as the above except that there, mention is made of "young boys sitting on mimbars to deliver lectures."

Important

Is there any of the facts mentioned by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) which are not present in our day and age? And how widespread? Take each of the things mentioned, cast a look at the present day world and and you will surely come to the conclusion that the while world is involved therein.

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Among whichever people there is much treachery and fraud (dishonesty) Allah will cast into their hearts fear of their enemies and among the people where there is much fornication and adultery, there will be much death occuring. And that people who cheat with the scales (when weighing) rizq will decrease. And where unfair judgement is given, many murders will occur. And that people where there is breaning of covenants and agreements, Allah will set an enemy power in authority over them.”

Sayyidina AbduLlah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once said with great urgency: “0 people of the Muhajireen there are five things which if you ever indulge therein, calamities will engulf you. Allah forbid that you ever indulge therein. One is that when among any people promiscuity (fornication and adultery) become widespread, plague will overtake them as well as new diseases which were previously unknown, and when any people cheat in weighing and measuring they will face drought, famine, hardship and the wrath of unjust tyrant rulers; and when any people withhold Zakaat, rains from the heavens will be withheld from them and had it not been for the presence and needs of mute animals even a little sprinkle of rain would not fall; and those people who break their covenant with Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) will fall prey to enemies; and the people who enforce unjust laws will be involved in civil war and rebellion.” (Targheeb).

It is also the theme of many reports from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) that where adultery and immorality abounds, poverty will surely prevail. According to another Hadeeth: “The people who are guilty of breaking their trusts will face bloodshed and civil war. And where indulgence in immorality and promiscuous behaviour occur there will be much death. And the people who withhold Zakaat, from them rain will be withheld.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Fear for others will engulf the hearts of the people among whom there is much bribery.”

Sayyidina Ka’ab (Radiallahu anhu) said: . ‘The doom of this Ummat will be breach of trust.” (Durr Manthoor).

In one Hadeeth it is stated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “From among this Ummat a certain group of people will at night eat, drink and amuse themselves and in the morning they will be transformed into apes and swine. And some will be punished by having the earth caved in over them. People will say: This night such-and such a family was buried alive and such-and-such a night a house caved in. And upon some people stones will rain down from the heavens as was rained down upon the

people of Lut. And some people will be destroyed by tornadoes. And why will all that happen? It will be due to the drinking of wine, wearing clothes of silk, keeping singing girls, devouring interest (usury), breaking relations with the next of kin." (Haakim, Durr Manthoor)

According to one Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "The righteous deed for which the reward is granted quickest is good treatment of the next of kin, so much so that, even though some families act sinfully, yet their wealth increases and they have abundance of offspring. And the sin which brings punishment quickest is unjust oppression and the giving of false evidence, for this not only devours possessions but also causes women to become sterile and depopulate their villages (due to much death after occuring)." (Duff Manthoor).

Further Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Allah postpones (and defers) the punishment for every sin for as long as He wishes. But the calamity which follows disobedience to parents is very soon. Before death occurs one becomes overtaken by it."
(Duff Manthoor).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Remain ciaste and clean, then your women will remain chaste and clean, treat your parents kindly. Then your children will treat you kindly." (Duff Manthoor)

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said with much emphasis and urgency: "By Him in Whose Hand my life lies, you shall continue to exhort others towards righteousness and continue to prohibit them from the doing of evil. Otherwise Allah will send down upon you such calamities and punishment that you will pray to Him but He will not answer you."

Also: "You shall continue to comniand others towards righteous deeds and continue to prohibit them from evil before such a time will dawn that you will beg of Allah and He will not answer your prayers."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) warned: "Through the iniquitous deeds of a few people Allah does not cause widespread calamity to descend upon all until such time that those deeds are performed in their presence and they, in spite of being capable of stopping it, refrain therefrom. At such a time the punishment descends upon all, high and low."

This is indeed the reason for all the daily calamities which we see and hear - the earthquakes, storms, droughts and famines, railway crashes etc. etc. These are daily occurances, and seem to be without limit and without end. We daily hear of new types of diseases, new forms of calamities which in days gone by were only heard of occasionally and seldomly. Those who are readers of newspapers are quite acquainted with these facts. And now, because the duty of calling others to good deeds and persuading them against evil has become well-nigh completely forsaken, it is too much to hope that our duaas will be favourably answered. What good seems to be forthcoming in the announcements of

special prayers after Salaah, when we ourselves adopt such a line of action which is the very cause of prayers not being answered?

Our Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had expressed a curse upon him who takes bribes and him who gives bribes and according to some reports even he who acts as intermediary in a bribe-deal is cursed. See for yourself how many people are thus earning Allah's curse.

Think, if Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had expressed a curse against anyone, what will be the final result awaiting such a person?
In another Hadeeth: "Do not oppress unjustly, or else your duaas will go unanswered." "The unjust oppressor is given a time (that perchance he may desist) but when Allah takes hold of him for punishment, there will be no escape."

Allah says in the Quran:

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَخْذُ رَبِّكَ اِذَا اَخَذَ الْقُرٰى وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ اِنَّ اَخْذَهٗ اَلِيْمٌ
شَدِيْدٌ

"Thus is the grasp of Allah. When He grasps a village while they do wrong, Indeed His grasp is painful and strong." (11.102)

Now look at all the evils of this world. Then consider. When revenge from Allah's side is so severe, can there be any end to the sufferings we deserve? In the Hadeeth we are told that the prayers of the unjustly treated and persecuted one, when made against anyone, is most certainly answered by Allah even if the supplicant be an evil-doer. In another Hadeeth it is said that the curses of such a person is most certainly answered even if he be a non-believer or an infidel. (Targheeb)

In one Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) reports that Allah says: "My most severe anger descends upon that person who unjustly persecutes such a man who has no other helper save Myself." (Mujam-Sagheer).

The Persian Poet sings:-
"Indeed fear the sigh of the downtrodden one,
For verily at the time he beseeches help (from the Lord)
From the doors of Allah comes forth
Divine Acceptance to welcome such prayer."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Those of the Heavens shall not show Mercy to him who shows no mercy to the dwellers on the earth." (Targheeb)

In such cases when bearing in mind now these days the duaas of those treated unjustly by us are on the increase and that the inmates of the heavens are showing no Mercy, it stands to reason that there should be so many bolts of lightning and storms directed against us. The Hadeeth states: "Beware of the curses of the persecutej one for nothing stands between such prayer and acceptance thereof."

According to another Hadeeth: “The curse of the persecuted one is accepted (by Allah) even if he be an evil-doer.”
In one Hadeeth Allah says: “I do not reject the prayer of the unjustly persecuted one even if he be a non believer.” (Hisne-Haseen)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “My Ummat will continue to live on the path of good and prosperity for as long as there will be no great incidence of illegitimate children among them. And when illegitimate children become Widespread among them, Allah will cause a great calamity of punishment to beset thcm.” (Targheeb)
Just forget for a moment he secret and hidden adultery and fornication that abounds today. Apart frorri that, is there any town or village anywhere where openly, boldly, flagrantly and shamelessly adultery and illegitimate children do not abound? Is it not a fact that even the Muslim members of the local town councils, local authorities and municipalities are forced to provide for these fatherless kids? Who can deny the great overwhelming presence of illegitimacy and fornication amongst us?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said: “The people among whom the taking of interest and indulgence in adultery appears openly, have indeed invited Allah’s wrath and anger upon themselves.” (Targheeb)

Now think! How large is the number of those involved in this immoral deed of evil? Think how many are the seemingly cultured men of nobility who rent out their properties for this evil of prostitution? Think how many religious minded members of local municipalities there are who are forced to provide special places where this low and shameful deed (of prostitution) can be performed?

Another thing: It has been reported in numerous authentic Ahaadeeth that the houses wherein there are dogs and pictures are not visited by the Angels of mercy.

Abu Wa-il (Radiallahu anhu) says: “Once I was accompanied by Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) on a journey into battle somewhere in Syria. While we stopped to rest at a certain place, the ruler of the locality, very eager to meet the ameer, came forward and as he arrived, he fell into prostration before Sayyidina Umar, Sayyidina Umar inquired:”Why are you prostrating before me?”
He replied:
“This has been our practice with regard to our own kings.”
Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) replied:
“Perform sujood only in front of the Being who has created you.” Then the ruler said:
“I have prepared a meal for you. Will you kindly proceed with me to our house?”
Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) inquired:
“Please tell me. Are there any pictures (of animate beings) in your house?” The ruler replied:
“Yes there are.”
Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said:
“We shall not enter into such a house. You may send some food to me here.” The ruler then had some food sent to Sayyidina Umar and he ate it.

Look at the houses of today's men of culture and learning. Is it at all possible for them to adorn their houses without pictures? Does any "narrowminded" Molvi have the cheek and the guts to object? Now you tell me. We have closed the doors of mercy upon ourselves and have adopted all those actions which are the sure causes of Allah's wrath. Is it any wonder that our troubles and problems should not increase and worsen?

Our pious ancestors and elders would not even enter such homes of the non- believers wherein there were pictures. Today we find that we, who came after them, even though claiming to be Muslims have adopted those very unlawful things with which we seek to adorn and beautify our houses. Consider every teaching of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). See our response thereto and the response of the world around us. You will continue to be increasingly astonished at our disregard of the teachings of Islam!

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "When the sun rises two angels stand near the rising sun and call out: '0 People turn to your Lord. The little you possess and which is sufficient for your needs is better for you than the greater wealth which may engage you in vain things.'
And when the sun sets two Angels stand near the setting sun and pray: '0 Allah give a goodly reward to him who spends in the path of righteousness, And destroy the wealth of him who withholds himself from spending righteously.' (Targheeb)

Think about those people who through being exceptionally stingy and miserly and who through numerous obstacles and troubles collect and gather hard- earned wealth, and then refuse to spend in Allah's path any portion thereof. See how they bring endless worries and anguish upon themselves in their striving to gain more and more; and yet they themselves cause the destruction of all they possess. Sometimes they take ill (with some disease) with the result that hundreds of rupees are spent on doctors and specialists for treatment and medicine. And then it may also happen that a case is brought against them in court (as a result of true or false charges). The result will then be that through this ensuing legal battle so much will be spent that the person may land up ruined financially. Then if through the blessings of some righteous deeds a person be preserved against such ruin another calamity may overtake him. It often happens that which the parents had earned through hard toiling and sweat over long years of struggling can be destroyed by his children being so carefree and loose-living that within months everything is wasted on luxuries and immoral sensual pleasures. This is definitely not a fabricated example of what is improbable. These are true facts of what happens quite often. We see how the fathers had gone through many trials and tribulations and spent much sweat in acquiring some wealth. After their death the children had wasted all that in a few weeks or months. In this way the heirs wasted all in a short space of time.

In the Hadeeth we are told:
"Man speaks about 'My wealth, my wealth,' whereas in actual fact all that is really his is that which he had eaten or the clothes he had worn and that which by spending in the path of Allah he had gathered for himself (as a treasure). Everything else belongs to others."
(Targheeb)

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Whatever wealth you gather which is in excess of your needs, belongs to others for whom you are merely the treasurer.’’ (Kitab-al-Mukhallaat)

This is also substantiated by many Ahaadeeth, all pointing out that all that one possesses beyond one’s needs are the possessions of others to be spent on them.

Allah Ta’aala’s Word states:

يَسْئَلُوْنَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ

“They ask you, 0 Muhammad, regarding what they should spend.Say: That which is superfluous.”

(2.219)

In this verse the word “Al-Afwa” i.e. “superfluous” is used. Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) says it means that which is left over after having seen to the basic needs of one’s family. Now there is another point which you should consider before proceeding. Today great emphasis is laid upon the eradication of poverty and the affording of help for the indigent and the poor. Do you find any other teachings better than the teachings of Islam in this respect? On the one hand, we have a doctrine in the world according to which a man shall not receive more than he requires. On the other hand is the doctrine that man be persuaded not to keep more than is necessary but should rather willingly and voluntarily spend the rest on the needy ones. What a big difference between the two. The first doctrine boils down to sheer oppression whereas the second one - the Islamic doctrine - is sheer goodness.

The first doctrine seeks to destroy ambition and to curb the progressive and active ones (because hard work is not adequately rewarded). The second doctrifle on the other hand encourages ambition. It encourages man to earn more and to spend such earned wealth willingly. Beyond that in encouraging charity it not only persuades one to look at one’s own needs but even encourages the reduction of one’s own needs in order to have more to spend on the needy.

Such is also the teaching of Islam. Thetefore in praising the Ansaar (the helpers of Madina) the Quran says:

يُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

“They (the Muhajireen) give preferance over themselves even though, there is hunger tormenting them.” (59 V 9)

The causes of our misery

Not only do they make this claim and not only do they utter mere words. No, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) personally set for all a practical example and made others act accordingly. Through the life of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and in the general character of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) this is clearly seen. There are numerous illustrations in the chapters - Kitabul-Zuhd viz, the chapter on Abstinence and

Kitabul-Riqaq in Hadeeth literature. If you wish to see sonie chosen examples you may see the few examples which I have noted down in my book - "Stories of the Sahabah."

At this moment it is neither my object to mention those illustrations in detail, nor is there the necessary space. All that I seek to point out at this stage is that the trials and tribulations we face today are purely as a result of our own doings. It is the cause of our illness and its remedy is supplied by the Rasul of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)- a truthful, trustworthy and expert specialist physician, whose diagnosis and remedial medicine is neither faulty nor will it ever be proven to be incorrect. This physician has cleary diagnosed our ills and advocated exactly which medicine will be advisable as treatment. Now it is not the work of such a doctor to avoid the causes of the illness nor to treat the illness. If anyone of the patients do not pay attention to the already- given instructions, it is but to his own detriment.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

لَقَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِهَا بَيْضَاءَ نَقِيَّةً

"Verily I have brought to you a law of Shariat which is clear, manifest."

He also said:

وَايْمُ اللهِ لَقَدْ تَرَكْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِ الْبَيْضَاءِ لَيْلُهَا وَنَهَارُهَا سَوَاءٌ

"I swear by Allah that I have left you on such a path which is clear, whereof the day and the night are equally clear. "(Jami-ul-Fawaid)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has given us clear instructions concerning each and everything. There is not a single thing concerning our worldly or spiritual life regarding which he had not given his opinion and guidance during his lifetime.

He said: "Hasten towards the doing of virtuous deeds and do so prior to that time when such evils shall appear which shall be as the dark portions of the night. (Therein the distinction between good and evil will be difficult indeed). At such a time a man will wake in the morning as a believer and at night he will be a non-believer. And at such time he will rise in the morning as a non- believer and at night he will be a believer. He will sell his faith for a meagre amount of worldly goods " (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Repent to Allah before the coming of death. Perform righteous deeds before becoming pre-occupied with duties. Remember Allah Most Glorified much, and give charity in secret and openly and in so doing strengthen your bond with Allah for indeed through these you shall receive rizq, you will receive help and so also shall your losses be made good." (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Through charit3',wealth does not decrease and whosoever pardons the unjust oppressor, for such shall Allah increase in honour. Hence forgive the oppressions and Allah will honour you.
And whosoever opens the door of begging for him is opened the door of poverty." (Mu'jam Sagheer)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “When my Ummat will begin to bear hatred in their hearts against the Ulema and when they shall make the construction of their bazaars and shopping places conspicuous and grand, and when they shall in contracting marriages consider only the possibility of accumulating wealth (instead of looking at the honesty, piety and deeds of suitable partners) then Allah will set four calamities over them: famine, the oppression of rulers, dishonesty of the officials administering their affairs and attacks by their enemies.” (Haakim)

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said: “The wages of sin is carelessness ifl Ibaadah, scarcity of rizq and lack of pleasure.” (Tarikh_ul-Khulafa)

Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu) relates:”I have served Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) for ten years. Not once did he ever confront me with a sour face. He said to me: ‘Always perform your wudu properly. By doing that your life on earth will be lengthened, nd your guardian angels will love you.’ (Tabrani - Sagheer). And perform some portion of your prayers at home. Through that the good in your home will be increased. And when you go home always greet your household members with salaam. Through that you will be blessed and also the people of your household.”

If you really want to inform yourself of the deeni as well as worldly benefits of Salaah, as expounded by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallaffi), then I suggest that you have a look at my booklet - “Virtues of Salaah.” Unfortunately mention cannot be made thereof here.

Anyway from all the Ahaadeeth we have quoted above, one thing becomes quite clear. That is that just as sin and evil deeds are the causes of calamities and afflictions, in the same manner obedience to Allah is the cause of success and prosperity in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالىٰ يَقُوْلُ يَاابْنَ اٰدَمَ تَفَرَّغْ لِعِبَادَتِيْ اَمْلأْ صَدْرَكَ غِنًى
وَاَسُدُّ فَقْرَكَ وَاِنْ لَاتَفْعَلْ مَلَأْتُ يَدَيْكَ شُغْلًا وَلَمْ اَسُدَّ فَقْرَكَ

“Verily Allah says: 0 son of Adam make time to serve me in Ibaadah and I will fill your heart with the feelings of sufficiency and satisfaction and I will remove poverty and want from you. If not then I will cause your hands to be continuously busy with preoccupation and 1 will not cause poverty to move from you.”

This statement comes from Allah, the Divine Creator, Lord of the Kingdoms and the All Powerful One in whose Hand lies the key to all the treasures of the world.

Other traditions also corroborate this statement that success in this world is dependent upon Ibaadah. But what do we do? In order to earn the worldly wealth we disregard the times of Salaah - those very times which bring success!! So when we think that our successes can only be attained through disobedience to Allah, is it any wonder that our ills continue to increase? How is it possible to solve the problem regarding our daily piece of bread by being completely unmindful of Allah? - the Giver of our daily bread

who had indeed warned that because of our neglecting lbaadah He will not cause poverty to be removed nor free the heart from preoccupying worries?

In a Hadeeth it is reported that Allah says:
“If My Servants serve Me dutifully, I will send over them the rains by night when they sleep and over them the sun will continue to shine (so that in their affairs there will be no hindrance) and the sound of lightning will not reach their ears (so that for them there will be no need for fear and anxiety)” (Jami- us-Sagheer)

But in contrast what is our position through our own deeds? Daily from all corners we hear complaints of little or no rain; and when it does come it brings disastrous storms and floods with the most fearful results.

In the’ ‘Ihya” (of Imam Ghazzali) there is a story of a severe drought during the time of Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam). Bani Israel went out into the desert for three consecutive days. Still the rains did not come. On the third day it was revealed to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) that the rains did not come because of the fact that among the congregation there was a man responsible for carrying and spreading gossip about others. That was the reason for their prayers remaining unanswered.

Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) then asked to be informed as to the identity of that person so that he could be separated from the congregation. Allah replied: “How is it that I prohibit you from tale-bearing and gossip and now you want me to be guilty of the same? I shall not point out the person responsible.”

Thereupon Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) addressed his people and exhorted them all to repent of talebearing and gossip. He made them seek forgiveness for all sins. Very soon the rains came down. (Ihya)
Imam Sufyan Thowri (Rahmatullah Alayh) relates that such a severe drought came over Banj Israel once. So severe was it that because of lack of food the people picked up dead animals from the dirt-heaps to eat. It finally became so bad that people even began to eat human flesh. The people became so bewildered and troubled that for days and days they proceeded to the deserts and onto the mountains to pray for rain.
Then Allah spoke to the Prophets of that time through Revelation:
“Even f your tongues become dry from all the prayers you say (while calling on Me) and even though you lift up your hands in prayer till they reach the very heavens, I shall not show any Mercy to any of you who cry and wail so bitterly until you people discard all your unjust dealings and unfair treatment among yourselves.”
Similar stories are numerous in the books of history and Ahaadeeth.
Indeed, there are many Ahaadeeth which tell us that the attainment of success and prosperity in this world and in the Hereafter comes through the doing of deeds of righLousness. They also clearly indicatȩ that the losses and blows suffered in this world and in the Hereafter is as a result of evil deeds committed. To quote all those Ahaadeeth is not possible for me and neither is it my objective.
What I want to show here is:

If the Rasul of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is indeed considered by us to be a truthful informer, what great injustice are we not doing to ourselves by knowingly allowing ourselves to be involved in those things which, according to him, most certainly causes our destruction? Why do we still adopt this line of action which causes ourselves great harm and misery? And yet our tongues still proclaim loudly that we are Muslims?
We are exactly like that sick man who suffers from diarrhoea. While his stomach continues to run because of open bowels, he still continues to take

purgative medicines and laxatives. This further aggravates his illness. Now he complains that his stomach does not stop running. Let someone ask this toolish man:
Dear brother, you treat your diarrhoea with purgatives. Tell me: Are these medicines supposed to stop the running stomach or to increase it?

Why this oppression

At this moment we are protesting against the persecution and oppression of the British colonial power in India.
At the same time we fear even more the future government that will take over (from them.) Did not Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) warn us about this? Did he not in very clear terms explain to us the causes of such goverments and actions? Is there any fault in the affectionate love, teachings and warnings of Sayyidina Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)?

May my soul, my father and my mother he sacrificed for him!! Never is it possible that there can be any flaw in his teachings!

He said: كَمَا تَكُوْنُوْنَ كَذٰلِكَ يُؤَمَّرُ عَلَيْكُمْ

"As you are (as far as your actions are) so will be the rulers that will soon be set over you." (Mishkat)

Therefore if we desire the best (and most just) government to rule over us, there will be only one way of assuring that. And that is righteous deeds.

عَنْ اَبِى الدَّرْدَاءِ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَعَالٰى يَقُوْلُ اَنَا اللّٰهُ لَاۤاِلٰهَ اَنَا مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ وَمَلِكُ الْمُلُوْكِ قُلُوْبُ الْمُلُوْكِ فِيْ يَدِىْ وَاِنَّ الْعِبَادَ اِذَا اَطَاعُوْنِىْ حَوَّلْتُ قُلُوْبَ مُلُوْكِهِمْ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَالرَّاْفَةِ وَاِنَّ الْعِبَادَ اِذَا عَصَوْنِىْ حَوَّلْتُ قُلُوْبَهُمْ بِالسَّخْطَةِ وَالنَّقْمَةِ فَسَامُوْهُمْ سُوْءَ الْعَذَابِ فَلَاتَشْغَلُوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ بِالدُّعَاءِ عَلَى الْمُلُوْكِ وَلٰكِنِ اشْغَلُوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ بِالذِّكْرِ وَالتَّضَرُّعِ كَىْ اَكْفِيَكُمْ مُلُوْكَكُمْ

In a second Hadeeth it is reported: Abu Darda (Radiallahu anhu) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Allah says: I am Allah besides whom there is no Diety, the Master of Kings, King of Kings. Verily the hearts of kings are under the control of My Hands. When My servants obey me, I turn the hearts of kings and rulers towards them so that they rule over them with mercy and kindness and when My servants

disobey Me, I turn the hearts of kings and rulers to treat them harshly, with anger and vengeance. Thereby they mete out torture and oppression. Hence do not occupy yourselves with praying for curses upon kings and instead turn to Me in remembrance and with humility. And I will preserve you against the tyranny of the kings."

Malik bin Maghool says: "I have read a verse similar to this in the Zaboor of Nabi Dawood (Alayhis Salaam)."

Similar guidance is also given in many similar Ahaadeeth. Among the masnoon duaas to be recited is this:

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَاتُسَلِّطْ عَلَيْنَا بِذُنُوْبِنَا مَنْ لَّايَرْحَمُنَا

"0 Allah, do not because of our sins place in authority to rule over us such as will not show any mercy to us."

In the Holy Quran Allah says:

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُوَلِّيْ بَعْضَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ

"And so We let some of the evil doers have authority over others because of that which they earn." (SVI v30)

There are various explanations given by the Commentators (Mufassireen) on this verse. Jalalain (Rahimahumullah) says it means exactly as we explained above (viz that harsh rulers are placed over people because of the sins of those people). Imam Qatadah (Rahmatullah Alayh) says that evil jinns are placed over them to chastise the wrong-doers.
Imam A'mash (Rahmatullah Alayh) again says it means that when the deeds of people become bad, the worst of cruel and unjust rulers are made to rule over them.

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says: "I have been told that either Nabi Moosa or Nabi Eesa once asked Allah: "What is the sign of Your being pleased with people?"

Allah replied: "The sign is that at the time of their sowing the fields I send the rains and at the time of harvesting I keep the rains away. Their administrative affairs I place in the hands of soft-hearted people and their public finances I allow to be controlled by generous ones."

They then inquired: "And what is the sign of Your being displeased with people?"

Allah replied: "The sign is that at the time of sowing the fields I withhold the rains and at the time of harvest I send torrential rains. Their administrative affairs I place in the hands of the foolish ones and their public finances I allow to be controlled by stingy persons."

(Durr Manthoor)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "You people should continue to enjoin people towards the doing of righteous deeds and you should continue to prohibit them from evil; otherwise Allah will put into authority over you the worst of people to rule over you. At such time the best from among you will pray to Allah (for deliverance) and your prayers will go unanswered.'.'

(Jami-us-Sagheer)

Often we feel this doubt within ourselves: Conditions are bad. Why do not the saintly ones (whose prayers are supposed to be answered) pray for deliverance? People who have these doubts should look at themselves and ask themselves how much of enjoining towards good and prohibiting from evil do they perform? When this important duty has been neglected it is no use hopirig for even their prayers to be answered.

In one Hadeeth it has been said:

وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللهُ بِقَوْمٍ خَيْرًا وَلَّى عَلَيْهِمْ حُلَمَائَهُمْ وَقَضَى بَيْنَهُمْ عُلَمَائُهُمْ وَجَعَلَ الْمَالَ فِيْ سُمَحَائِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ بِقَوْمٍ شَرًّا وَلَّى عَلَيْهِمْ سُفَهَائَهُمْ وَقَضَى بَيْنَهُمْ جُهَّالُهُمْ وَجَعَلَ الْمَالَ فِيْ بُخَلَائِهِمْ

"When Allah desires the well-being of a nation, He appoints tolerant good- natured rulers over them. The learned scholars (Ulema) judge their cases (justly and with knowledge). And their wealth lies in the hands of the generous ones (so that all benefit through their generosity). And when Allah desires bad for a nation (because of their iniquity) He appoints fools to rule over them, their ignorant ones judge their cases and their wealth lies in the hands of the stingy ones.''

According to another Hadeeth it is said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى إِذَا غَضِبَ عَلَى أُمَّةٍ لَمْ يُنْزِلْ بِهَا عَذَابَ خَسْفٍ وَلَامَسْخٍ غَلَتْ أَسْعَارُهَا وَيَحْبِسُ عَنْهَا أَمْطَارَهَا وَيَلِيْ عَلَيْهَا أَشْرَارُهَا

"When Allah is angry with a people and the ultimate extreme punishment like the earth caving in upon them, or transfiguration of men into animal does not descend upon them, he causes prices (of commodities) to rise high and rains to be withheld from them and the worst of people are made to rule over them."

According to another Hadeeth reported by Jabir (Radiallahu anhu):

إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُوْلُ أَنْتَقِمُ مِمَّنْ أَغْضَبُ ثُمَّ أُصَيِّرُ كُلًّا إِلَى النَّارِ

Verily Allah says: *"I take revenge against those who have earned my anger and then I shall cast them all into hell."* (Tabrani)

لَاتَسُبُّوا الْأَئِمَّةَ وَادْعُوا اللهَ لَهُمْ بِالصَّلَاحِ فَاِنَّ صَلَاحَهُمْ لَكُمْ صَلَاحٌ

For this reason it has been stated in another Hadeeth:
"Do not curse or swear the rulers. Instead pray to Allah for their goodness for indeed their goodness is their well-being." (Tabrani)

This Hadeeth indicates that abusing, swearing and cursing the rulers is not going to improve them.

In another Hadeeth we are told:

لَاتَشْغَلُوْا قُلُوْبَكُمْ بِسَبِّ الْمُلُوْكِ وَلٰكِنْ تَقَرَّبُوْا اِلَى اللهِ بِالدُّعَاءِ لَهُمْ يَعْطِفُ اللهُ قُلُوْبَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ

"Do not occupy your hearts showering abuse on the rulers and kings. instead draw near to Allah in prayers for them. Perchance Allah will cause their hearts to turn in kindness towards you." (Jami)

Makki Bin Ibrahim (Rahmatullah Alayh) says:
"While we were sitting in the company of Ibn 'Aun the people started to discuss and abuse Bilal bin Abi Burdah. Ibn 'Aun remained silent. They said to him: "It is because of you that we are abusing and reviling him because of the fact that he had treated you badly."

Ibn 'Aun replied:
"Every single word of mine becomes registered in my book of deeds. Surely on the Day of Judgement those deeds will be read out. I so much more prefer that instead of abuse against another in my book, much Zikr of La Ilaha Iilallah should be registered therein on that day." (IHYA)

Once in the presence of a saintly man someone cursed Hajjaaj the great tyrant. The saint said: "Do not do that. What happens now is because of your own actions. I fear the possibility that in the event of Hajjaaj being dismissed from office or in the event of his death, monkeys or swine may be made to rule over you." (MaqaaFid-ul-Hasanah)

There is a famous proverb in Arabic:

أَعْمَالُكُمْ عُمَّالُكُمْ

'Your deeds are your rulers.'

In other words: As your deeds are, so too will be your rulers.

Disregard for the Messenger's (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) Warnings

Be as it may, it is not my intention to collect and quote all the Ahaadeeth and stories dealing with this topic. What I intended to indicate here is that all the trials, sufferings and hardships the Muslims now face have all been clearly prophecised and warned against by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Numerous references are found in the compilations of Ahaadeeth.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) clearly and eloquently said that sufferings in this world are as a result of disobedience to Allah's commands, whereas good deeds lead to happiness in this world.

He also showed how specific misfortunes result from specific sins. Similarly he also showed how specific rewards are the result of specific good deeds. People continue to cry about their misfortune while hoping for good reward, but they pay no heed to those things which cause these and upon which they depend. In fact they even oppose the coming into

existence of those causes. They wIlfully and purposely disregard those causes and if anyone is brave enough to warn them about it, they attack him, and revile him.

Yes indeed we are just like the sick man who suffers from diarrhoea. While having a running stomach, he takes some scammony every two hours. (Scammony is a medicine made out of gum resin which is used to bring about a running stomach, i.e. a purgative). This seems a foolish choice of medicine. But when anyone tries to stop him, he sets upon the warner calling him a fool. What is the use of this person complaining to high heaven that his running stomach does not stop when he continues to take scammony?

It is quite amazing to note that nowadays when an ordinary simple doctor, even a non-believer, says something is harmful to health (as some doctors now say that guava juice causes cholera), you will find that not even the bravest will consume it. Even if a street-sweeper, or lavatory cleaner, comes along and says that in this lane there is a big black snake, not even the most courageous one of us will dare enter that lane. If an ignorant stupid says that a tiger sits waiting along the road, none will venture on that road. The best you could possibly expect is a person going that way in the company of three or four companions with a couple of guns, ready to kill.

But here in Islam the truthful and Holy Rasul of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) informs his people of the beneficial things and warns against evil. He who is the most loving and wise, - He who is mnst concerned about the safety, progress and well-being of this Ummat and is filled with anxiety regarding this Ummat and its plight. He is the one who truthfully j0forms this Ummat and what do we find?
We find that in spite of their lofty claims of respect for him and devotion, they care not one iota for his injunctions and warnings. What justice is this? If this is not injustice, then what is it?

If today the government passes a proclamation stating that such-afld-such statements are forbidden an and punishable with ten years imprisonment, you will find the bravest and most outspoken leaders, speakers and editors will choose their words most carefully for their own safety.

But the Lord of the world, King of Kings - under whose control fall all governments and kings - gives a Quranic command - a declaration of war against those involved in usury. And people pay no heed to it.

In the Hadeeth-e-Qudsi He proclaims that bearing enmity against His saintly friends is as being tantamount to declaration of war with Him.

He announces a curse upon those taking part in usurious transactions.

With regard to wine He curses ten different persons involved in it.

But how many are there whose consciences trouble them as to what they are busy doing?

How many are there who worry about the kind of punishment that may come to them? Let every man ponder for himself. This is not something others can answer for you.

And if, we, instead of discarding our evil ways, consider that those very ways are ways of success or progress, then be prepared to engage in a fight with Allah and to bear the curses of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Then also be prepared to continue to put up with calamities, misfortune and suffering.

"0 morning breeze all this has been brought about by you."

Why non-Muslims prosper?

Note: At this stage after taking in what has been said above, the masses and even some scholars find some difficulty in understanding.

Their problem is this: Just as deeds of evil and righteousness are harmful or beneficial for the Muslim, so they should also be for the non-Muslim. That is indeed how it should be. Harmful things should be harmful at all times. But how is it that the non-believers, in spite of their own evil deeds, still attain success and prosperity while on the other hand Muslims find themselves in a sorry state with their troubles and worries continuously on the increase?

So much have some ignorant Muslims been troubled and perplexed that they even went to the extent of rejecting the tenets of Shariat and the Hadeeth.They went so far as to look at the non-believers, and decided that those evils which are present in the make-up of the non-believers were the very causes of their success.

In actual fact this difficulty in understanding is a result of ignorance of Islamic teachings. In the teachings of Islam and the commands of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) there is nothing which has not been explained quite clearly. But who will take the trouble to find out what is the answer?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said that one of Allah's Nab once questioned Allah about this problem saying: "Ya Allah. A certain bondsman of yours is a Muslim performing good deeds. But You take the world away from him and send calamities over him. Then there is a bondsman of Yours who is a non-believer, disobedient to You. Yet You ward off calamities from him, granting him (sufficient) of this world."

Allah revealed to this Nabi: "My believing bondsman has some evil deeds and for this reason I treat him thus so that when he returns to Me I shall give him the reward for his good deeds. As for the non-believer, he has some good deeds and for this reason I treat him thus by way of rewarding him for his good deeds so that when he returns to Me I shall give him the punishment for his evil deeds." (Majma-uz-Zawaaid)

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ الْمُؤْمِنَ حَسَنَةً يُعْطِىْ عَلَيْهَا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَيُثَابُ عَلَيْهَا
فِىْ الْآخِرَةِ وَأَمَّا الْكَافِرُ فَيُطْعَمُ بِحَسَنَاتِهِ فِىْ الدُّنْيَا حَتّٰى إِذَا
أَفْضٰى إِلَى الْآخِرَةِ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ حَسَنَةٌ يُعْطٰى بِهَا خَيْرًا

"Allah does not diminish the reward of any believer for any good deed. In this world He is granted success through this deed and in the Hereafter he is richly rewarded. As for the non-believer, he is given sustenance in this world through his good deeds but when he comes to the Hereafter he will have no good deed for which he may be rewarded (because of the absence of Imaan which is a pre-condition for reward in the Hereafter)."

(Mishkat)

And in another Hadeeth

إِذَا أَرَادَ اللهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الْخَيْرَ عَجَّلَ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِذَا أَرَادَ بِعَبْدِهِ الشَّرَّ أَمْسَكَ عَنْهُ ذَنْبَهُ حَتَّى يُوَافِيَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"When Allah desires good for his slave He punishes him for his sins in this world (because worldly torments are much lighter than that of the Hereafter). And when Allah desires revenge (as punishment) for His slave, He withholds punishment for his sinfull deeds in this world so that on the day of Qiyamat He gives him full punishment."

It has been repeatedly stated in Hadeeth that because there is no reward for the non-believer in the Hereafter, he receives his reward for any virtuous and charitable act in this world. This is because he can obtain reward for good deeds only in this life. This is why, in spite of his numerous evil deeds, he will, in this world, be attaining so much of success and prosperity because of his good deeds. On the other hand, the Muslim receives reward for his good deeds in the Hereafter and most of his crimes and sins are punished in this world. Thus as many as are his faults, sins and evils, will be his sorry state and his miseries.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

أُمَّتِيْ هٰذِهِ أُمَّةٌ مَرْحُوْمَةٌ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهَا عَذَابٌ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا اَلْفِتَنُ وَالزَّلَازِلُ وَالْقَتْلُ

"This Ummat of mine is looked upon by Allah with Mercy. In the Hereafter they will not suffer torment. Its punishment (for sins committed comes in this world and) comes in the form of ordeals, earthquakes and killings."

Here the students of history came accross a problem which is almost contradictory to what is said above. The experience of some nations indicates that as long as they continued in their irreligious and evil ways, no punishment from Allah was sent over them. But when there was improvement for the better, in their ways, then came the punishment.

The answer to this problem is also found in the discussion above. It is not inconceivable that their irreligious ways were such that they were in fact very near to Kufr. Which meant that punishment in this world was not necessary. Later after the definite and profound change for the better, they became fit for being punished in this world.

It is almost like a patient who is very ill. While he is so very ill, surgery will be of no use, for the surgeon will not operate because the patient is so very near death. Surgery is only made use of when there is hope of being cured of an ailment.

In Bukhari and Muslim Shareef etc. is the story of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam's) displeasure with the wives of his household. At that time Suyyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) is reported to have said: "I went to the house of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and found that his household consisted of three or four things. There were a few handfuls of barley and one or two untanned skins lying in one corner. Apart from these there were one or two other similar items. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was laying on a mat of palm-tree leaves without any spread with which to cover his body (as usually did), and there was nothing on the mat covering the roughness. The result was that the rough pattern of the mat left its imprint on his body. Seeing this (simplicity) I began to cry bitterly. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked the reason for this weeping. I replied:

O Rasul of Allah! Why should I not cry when marks of the mat on which you lie have been imprinted on your holy body? And why should I not cry when the complete contents of your home consist of only this which I now see? Look at the condition of Rome and Persia! They do not worship Allah but look at their riches and wealth on the one si& and your poverty on the other! (Kazrat Umar continues):
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was at the time laying with his head on a pillow, but hearing these words from me, sat upright and said:

Are you still in doubt, 0 Son of Khattab? They - the Romans and the Persians, are a people whose rewards for their good deeds have been granted to them in this world.

In the Quran we are told:

أَوَ فِيْ شَكٍّ أَنْتَ يَا ابْنَ الْخَطَّابِ أُوْلٰئِكَ قَوْمٌ عُجِّلَتْ لَهُمْ طَيِّبَاتُهُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا

وَلَوْ لَا أَنْ يَّكُوْنَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَّكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمٰنِ لِبُيُوْتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَّمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُوْنَ وَلِبُيُوْتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَّسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِئُوْنَ وَزُخْرُفًا وَإِنْ كُلُّ ذٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

"And had it not been that (through love of wealth) all mankind would have become one nation (almost all non-believers), We would have appointed for those who disbelieved in the Merciful One, roofs of silver over them for their houses and their stairs (of silver) whereby they ascend, and doors of silver for their houses and couches of silver whereon they recline and also ornaments of gold. "Yet all that would have been only a provision for this world's life. And the (success of) the Hereafter is only with your Lord for those who guard against evil (and fear Allah).

(43. 33-35)

According to one Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Allah Ta'aala says: 'Had it not been that the believers would have become distressed (and troubled on

seeing the ease and comfort of others as compared to their own sufferings) I would have bound the non-believers in iron cases (so that they feel no pain at all) and I would have freely granted the world to them." (Durr Manthoor)

All this is because in Allah's sight the world is of no value and weight. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself says: "If in the sight of Allah this world had the value of the wing of a mosquito, the non-believers would not have received a mouthful of water thereof." (Durr manthoor and Tirmidhi)

On one occasion while Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was going somewhere he happened to find a dead goatling lying around, without ears. He asked: "Who is there who will buy this goatling from me for one dirham (approximately 25 paisa or 5c)?"

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) answered: "No one will even take it even if given free." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "Well in the sight of Allah, this world is even more contemptible and valueless than this goatling." (Muslim - Mishkat)

From these Ahaadeeth we come to know that in Allah's sight this world has no value at all. Because the non-believers have as their major aim in life the attainment of this world they are given the world according to their treasure of good deeds. The Muslims on the other hand since having accepted Islam have their eyes on the success and permanent well-being of the Hereafter to which they have a special right.

And the Muslim however a great sinner he may be, will, eventually after having been punished or pardoned for his sins, enter Jannat to enjoy its pleasures. Hence because of his iniquities he will be made to suffer the sorrows and hardships of this world. If he is not made to suffer here, there is indeed a dangerous path ahead of him.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "When you see anyone enjoying the bounties of this world in spite of his evil deeds then (let it be known that) that is Istidraaj (i.e. a postponement of punishment from Allah like a rope with which he is allowed to hang himself)."

Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) recited the verse:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا
فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ

'And then when they had forgotten that whereof they had been reminded, we opened unto them the doors of all things until they were rejoicing in that which they had been granted, we seized them suddenly, and unawares and lo! they were dumbfounded."

(6. 44)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The believer is like cultivated crops which the wind blows hither and thither. In this manner the believer is continuously being visited by ordeals and hardship. The hypocrite is like a tall pine tree which is not bent by the winds, but when (strong winds blow) it is completely uprooted." (Mishkat - Muslim - Bukhari)

It can also be proved from many other sayings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) that the cause for the prosperity of the non-believers is Allah's postponement of their punishment and their own worldly good deeds. Hence it is clear that when any individual non-believer or group of non- believers do any deeds of righteousness, they will prosper and attain some measure of worldly success. Even their evil deeds will go unpunished whereas even the seemingly insignificant evils of a Muslim will bring punishment. As much as are their iniquities, whether individual or collective, Muslims will suffer sorrow, ordeals and hardships accordingly.
The only manner in which they can save themselves from all anxieties is to discard sinful acts as well as to prevent others from sin. The Hadeeth teaches us that calamities continue to attach themselves to the person of the believer, to his wealth, and his offspring, to such an extent that he dies in this state that no sin is attached to him. (Mishkat, Tirmidhi)

Another Hadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) says: "When Allah desires good for anyone, He completes for him the punishment of his sins in this world. And when He desires evil for anyone (as a result of his numerous sins), He wards off evil from him in this world so that in the Hereafter He may give him the complete punishment."

(Mishkat, Tirmidhi)

Why the decline and fall of non-believers

But how is it that we still see the non-believers also facing decline and destruction? This is because of their injustices, tyranny and oppression and comes about when immorality and promiscuous behaviour had reached overwhelming heights or because of their mockery of the Holy Prophets of Allah. For these sins there is no relaxation or postponement of punishment. For these sins all-encompassing, general calamities descend upon them.

Thus you will see that all the stories of the previous nations who were destroyed were involved in one or other of these sins. A study of the decline of nations gives a clear indication of this, viz, that whenever and wherever any nation was unjust and oppressive the residents of the heavens were excited towards helping the oppressed and the unjustly treated ones. Hence Allah is reported to say (in Hadeeth-e-Qudsi): "I hear the cursing pleas of any unjustly oppressed victim even if he be an infidel."

And so one should understand that when any ruler, minister of state, governor, official or leader or anyone who is in authority, oppresses or treats unjustly any of his subordinates or subjects, then instead of oppressing them, he is in fact doing great injustice to himself and his ruling class. He is in fact working for the fall and destruction of his own people with his own hands, whether the injustice being done is against a community or against an individual. Injustice and tyranny are never without effect and result. And when Allah's vengeance comes into effect they wail and weep, but wailing and weeping will not avail them.

At this stage - much as I would have liked to go into detail, there is no space for further detail. There is in actual fact no need for detail because the decline and fall of all the great empires in history bears out what I say.

The gist of what I try to explain is that Allah - The Musabe bul Asbaab (the Causer of causes) had created separate causes for the worldly progress of the Muslims and non-Muslims. It is wrong to maintain that the very thing which is a cause for progress for non-Muslims is also cause for the progress of Muslims. It is also wrong to believe that those things which are not an iinpediment or hindrance to their progress will also not hinder the progress of Muslims.

To have such views shows ignorance of our deen and lack of knowledge of the words of Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

Conclusion:
Please understand this very well: the real place for the punishment of the non- believers is the Hereafter. Sometimes, however, for the sake of expedience, it is also meted out to them in this world. Whatever good works and position they have, are solely as a result of the returns given to them by the Lord of this World, the Most Just King.
However, this too is given to them in this world and in the Hereafter there is nothing for them. This is only right because seeing that they do not have faith in the Hereafter way should they be rewarded there? And it is only right that through their denial of the Hereafter they should be punished there.

Allah says:

وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّذِىْ كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُوْنَ

"And unto them is said: 'Taste the chastisement of the fire which you used to deny. "
(32. 20)

This same type of statement appears in the Quran on numerous occasions.
For example:

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا عَلَى النَّارِ اَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبٰتِكُمْ فِىْ
حَيٰوتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُوْنِ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ فِىْ الْاَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْسُقُوْنَ

"And on the Day when those who disbelieved shall be exposed to the fire, (to hem shall be said): 'You have (already) attained your good things of your worldly We and have enjoyed them.And this Day you shall be granted the punishment of those joys, for your having been arrogant without right and for your immoral behaviour and iniquity.(46. 20)

And now I want to draw your attention to a few verses of the Quran.

اُولٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْاٰخِرَةِ

1. *"These are the people who buy the life of this world at the price of the hereafter. Their penalty shall not be lightened... Nor shall they be helped." (2.86)*

فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُوْلُ رَبَّنَا اٰتِنَا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَمَالَهٗ فِىْ الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْ
خَلَاقٍ

2. *And from amongst men there are those who say: "Our Lord, give us the bounties of this world. But they will have no portion in the Hereafter". (2.200)*

زين للذين كفروا الحيوة الدنيا ويسخرون من الذين آمنوا
والذين اتقوا فوقهم يوم القيمة والله يرزق من يشاء بغير
حساب

3. *"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for Allah bestows His abundance without measure on whom He wills".* (2. 212)

It has been reported in one Hadeeth: "Allah Ta 'aala grants the material world to that person whom He loves, and to whomsoever He does not love. While deen is granted only to that person whom He loves. That person who has been endowed with deen is the beloved of Allah."

قل متاع الدنيا قليل والآخرة خير لمن اتقى ولا تظلمون فتيلا

4. *"Say: Short is the enjoyment of this world: The Hereafter is the best for those who do right: Never will ye be dealth with unjustly in the very least.(4.77)*

وما الحيوة الدنيا إلا لعب ولهو وللدار الآخرة خير للذين يتقون
أفلا تعقلون

5. *"What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the home in the Hereafter for those who are righteous will ye not then understand." (6.32)*

وذر الذين اتخذوا دينهم لعبا ولهوا وغرتهم الحيوة الدنيا

6. *"Leave alone those who take their religion to be mere play and amusement and are deceived by the life of this world."* (6.70)

تريدون عرض الدنيا والله يريد الآخرة

7. *"Ye desire the temporal goods of this world; But Allah desires (for ye) the Hereafter." (8.67)*

أرضيتم بالحيوة الدنيا من الآخرة فما متاع الحيوة الدنيا في
الآخرة إلا قليل

8. *"Do ye prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life as compared to the Hereafter."* (9.38)

من كان يريد الحيوة الدنيا وزينتها نوف إليهم أعمالهم فيها وهم
فيها لا يبخسون أولئك الذين ليس لهم في الآخرة إلا النار
وحبط ما صنعوا فيها وباطل ما كانوا يعملون

9. *"Those who desire the life of the present and its glitter - to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein without dimunition. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the fire: Vain are the designs they frame therein. And of no effect are the deeds that they do." (11.15-16)*

الله يبسط الرزق لمن يشاء ويقدر وفرحوا بالحيوة الدنيا وما
الحيوة الدنيا في الآخرة إلا متاع

10. *"Allah doth enlarge or grant by strict measure the sustenance which He giveth to whomsoever He pleases. The worldly rejoice in the life of this world but the life of this world is but little comfort in the Hereafter*." (13.26)

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيْهَا مَانَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُّرِيْدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلٰهَا مَذْمُوْمًا مَّدْحُوْرًا وَمَنْ اَرَادَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَسَعٰى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُوْرًا كُلًّا نُّمِدُّ هٰؤُلَاءِ وَهٰؤُلَاءِ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُوْرًا

11. *"If any do wish for the transitory things of this world We readily grant them, such things as We will to such persons as We will. In the end have We provided for them Hell. They will bum therein dejected and rejected. Those who do wish for the things of the Hereafter, and strive therefore with all due striving and have faith, they are the ones whose striving is acceptable to Allah. Of the bounties of thy Lord We bestow freely on all these as well as those. The bounties of Thy Lord are not closed (to anyone)."*

(17.18-19)

An attempt is accepted on three conditions:

a. Intention

b. Pious action

c. Belief

وَلَاتَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ اِلٰى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهٖ اَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيْهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَّاَبْقٰى

12. *"Nor strain your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to the parties of them, the splendour of the life of this world, through which We test them. But the provisions of Thy Lord is better and more enduring." (20. 131)*

اَفَمَنْ وَّعَدْنٰهُ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَاقِيْهِ كَمَنْ مَّتَّعْنٰهُ مَتَاعَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِيْنَ

13. *"Are these two alike —one to whom We have made a goodly promise, and who is going to reach its fulfilment. And one to whom We have given the good things of this life, but who, on the Day of Judgement, is to be among those brought up for punishment?"*

(28. 61)

قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ يُرِيْدُوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا يٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَااُوْتِيَ قَارُوْنُ اِنَّهُ لَذُوْ حَظٍّ عَظِيْمٍ وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ اٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَّلَايُلَقّٰهَا اِلَّا الصّٰبِرُوْنَ

14. *"Said those whose aim is the life of this world: "Oh that we had the like of what Quran has got for he is truly a Lord of mighty good fortune. But those who had been granted true knowledge said: "Alas for you! The word of Allah (in the Hereafter) is best for those who believe and work righteousness: But this none shall attain, save those who steadfastly persevere."*

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِيْنَ لَايُرِيْدُوْنَ عُلُوًّا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَلَافَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

15. *"That home of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high handedness or mischief on earth. And the best end is for the righteous ones."* (28.83)

اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللهِ حَقٌّ فَلَاتَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَايَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللهِ الْغَرُوْرُ

16 *"Verily the promise of Allah is true: let not then the present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver deceive you about Allah." (31.33)*

من كان يريد حرث الآخرة نزد له في حرثه ومن كان يريد حرث
الدنيا نؤته منها وما له في الآخرة من نصيب

17. *“To any that desires the crops of the Hereafter We give increase in his tilth; and to any that desires the tilt/i of this world, We grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the Hereafter.”* (42.20)

All these verses as well as others f’om the Holy Quran have this collective theme that for the non-believers the ultimate goal is the acquisition of the life and enjoyment of this world. For them only the benefits of this world are considered benefits. They have no faith in the Hereafter. If some denominations or sects do accept the Hereafter, then because of not fulfilling the conditions for proper Imaan, it is not acceptable at all. Hence whatever they receive from Allah is given to them here. Whatever good works they perform are rewarded in this world.
Once someone inquired from Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) what was the meaning of the verse from Surah Hood:

من كان يريد الحيوة الدنيا .....

“Those who desire the life of the present and its glitter - to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein - without diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the fire: vain are the designs they frame therein, and of no effect are the deeds that they do.” (11.15,16)

He replied: “The reward of their good deeds is given to them in the form of health in body, in their offspring, children and grandchildren, and in their enjoyment in riches.”

The theme of this verse is strongly linked in meaning with the verse from Surah Bani-Israel:

من كان يريد العاجلة عجلنا له فيها ما نشاء لمن نريد

“If any do wish for the transitory things (of this life), We readily grant them - such things as We will to such persons as We will.” (17.18)

And Allah grants to whomsoever He wishes, without compulsion from anyone. Sayyidina Sa’eed bin Jubair (Radiallahu anhu) also gave the same meaning to the above verse from Surah Hood, Hazrat Qatada (Radiallahu anhu) is of the same opinion. viz., that they will receive the reward for their good deeds in this world, so much so that by the time they are in the Hereafter, no righteous deed is left unrewarded. As for the believer, he shall receive his reward in this world (and because of having Imaan) as well as in the Hereafter.

Mujahid is another one who says that non-believers receive their rewards for good deeds in this world.

Maymoon bin Mehraan says: “Whosoever wishes to see his standing with Allah should cast a look at his deeds, because he will be treated according to his deeds. Everyone - believer or non-believer will surely be rewarded. However a believer will be rewarded here as well as in the Hereafter, whereas the non-believer will be rewarded only in this world.” (Durr Manthoor)

It is reported that Muhammed bin Kaab discussed the verse:

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

'And whosoever does an atom 's weight of good will surely see it. And whosoever does an atom 's weight of evil will surely see it." (99.7,8)

He said: "If a non-believer does any atom's weight of good, he definitely receives his reward in this world during his lifetime, in the form of health, wealth, offspring - to such an extent that when he passes from this life no such deed is left which has not been rewarded. If a believer does any atom's weight of evil, he receives its punishment (mainly) in this world, being punished in health, wealth and offspring - to such an extent that when he passes from this world no such evil deed is left for which he has not been punished." (Durr Manthoor)
It is for this reason that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

أُمَّتِي هٰذِهِ مَرْحُومَةٌ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهَا عَذَابٌ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّمَا عَذَابُهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا اَلْفِتَنُ وَالزَّلَازِلُ وَالْقَتْلُ وَالْبَلَايَا

"This Ummat of mine is favoured with mercy. There shall not be (much) punishment on them in the Hereafter. Their punishment in this world shall be in the form of turbulances, earthquakes, killings and calamities."

In another Hadeeth it is said: "From this favoured Ummat of mine the permanent punishment of the Hereafter has been lifted. On them will be the torment they cause one another." In another Hadeeth it is said: "The punishment of my Ummat is in this worldly life." And "Allah has ordained the punishment of my Ummat in this world."

(Mujma-ul-Zawaid)

From all these Ahaadeeth it should be known that the major share of the retribution and punishment for the sins of this Ummat comes in this world. This is indeed a mercy unto them. Were this not so, that in spite of their sins they were not involved in calamities and trials, it would be very frightful indeed. So the only manner in which this Ummat of Muhammed (Saliallahu Alayhi Wasallam), which is enjoying Allah's Mercy, can save itself from the misfortunes, catastrophes, worries and humiliations of this world, is to avoid sin and evil completely. And when by chance sins do occur, they should weep in sorrow, seek forgiveness and repent to Allah. There is no other way out. It is not possible at all for a Muslim to remain a Muslim and at the same time gain worldly prosperity, while at the same time living a sinful life!!

Yes, if he becomes-a Kaafir he is sure to progress in spite of his numerous iniquities, because while a Kaafir, he will receive success, progress and prosperity for even the simple deeds of good he does.

It is reported that Sayyidina Sulaymaan bin Aamir (Radiallahu anhu) asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "My father was a man who loved and treated his immediate relatives kindly. He was careful in fulfilling his promises, and showed kindness and respect to guests. (Will these deeds benefit him at all)?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: Did he die before Islam? He replied: “Yes.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “It will not benefit him. However his children will surely benefit thereby. Your family will never be disgraced or humiliated. They will never become poor and destitute.”

This Hadeeth also serves to clear up a query that may come into the minds of some people. The query is this: We see many non-believers in this world who are highly successful, prosperous and making progress. This is supposed to be because of their worldly good deeds. But we find that their meagre good deeds are not of such a nature that they should deserve so much success. The above Hadeeth provides the answer. It is quite possible that they may be enjoying the fruits of the deeds of their fathers.

Anyway from the Ahaadeeth and Quranic texts it becomes clear that the priciples leading to the success and prosperity of the Muslims and the non- believers are not the same. Some are common to both and some are not. The major cause for a Muslim’s success is acting upon the injunctions of deen and avoiding sin, for as much as they indulge in sinful acts will they face calamities. For a Muslim to look at the non-believers and to see them committing the same sins and still enjoying progress while these sins bring no misfortune to them - and then to become fearless of those sins, is indeed wrong and only entangles him in more misfortunes. When Muslims, indulging in sins and are not visited by calamities, it is so much more dangerous. In such a case it is merely a temporary postponement of punishment. Revenge will come quickly and suddenly.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Whosoever in spite of his sins and transgressions desires to attain a certain thing, will become far removed from that thing and drawn near to that which he fears.” (Jami-us-Sagheer)

Imitating the non-believers

Hence for a Muslim to desire and hope for prosperity and progress in spite of his sins, means being far removed from prosperity and success. Furthermore, for a Muslim to envy the non-believers and to try and imitate and emulate them, not only shows extreme lack of self-respect and shamelessness but is also a clear sign of surrender to failure.

There used to be a custom of the Persian and Byzantium Empires that whenever an army was victorious in battle they used to cut off the head of the commander of the defeated army. Then as an exhibition of their pride and joy this was sent to their own kings as a trophy.

During the Khilaafat of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) the Muslims met the Romans (of the Byzantium Empire) in battle. The Muslims defeated them and reckoning that such was the custom of the enemy, decided to do the same to them. Hence they cut off the head of the commander and sent it with Sayyidina Uqbah bin Aamir (Radiallahu anhu) to Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) in Medina. When the messenger came to

him with the severed head, Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) showed intense displeasure. Seeing this Sayyidina Uqbah (Radiallahu anhu) exclaimed: “0 Successor of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) (why this displeasure?) These people will do the same thing to us.” Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) replied: “What? Will the practices and actions of the people of Persia and Byzantium be followed? Never should the head of anyone be brought before me. For us the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is sufficient to be followed.”

(Shara—ul—Siyar vol.1)

Some jurists have given permission for this severing of heads on the authority of certain texts. Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) did not agree with those Sahabah. Thus he prohibited it and this is the reason for admonishing Sayyidina Uqbah (Radiallahu anhu) for sçeking authority in the actions of Rome and Byzantium.

While Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) was en route to Syria he came across a piece of land which was quite muddy. He dismounted his camel, took off his socks, put them on his shoulder and splashed through the mud. He took hold of the camel’s nose-strip and led it.

Sayyidina Abu Ubaydah (Radiallahu anhu) said to him: “You have now done something which is quite despicable in the eyes of the people of Syria. I would not like the people of the town to see you like this.”

On hearing this Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) struck his hand against his breast and exclaimed: “Abu Ubaydah, if anyone other than you had said this, I would have given him some severe exemplary punishment. We were a despicable people, dishonoured, and Allah granted us honour through Islam. If we are going to seek honour through anything other than Islam, Allah will cause us to be disgraced.” (Haakim)

Yes indeed! For a Muslim the true honour is that which is considered as honour in the sight of Allah, even if that is considered to be dishonourable in the eyes of the world.

Urdu Couplet:

لوگ سمجھیں مجھے محروم وقار و تمکین ⁂ وہ نہ سمجھیں کہ میری بزم کے قابل نہ رہا

“Let them describe me as despised, lacking in prestige, lacking in dignity but let no one look upon me as not worthy and equal rank.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said that the man who while being disobedient to Allah seeks honour among men will find that those who praise him will become his critics and degrade him. This same subject has been discussed in various ways in Maqausid-el-Hasanah. So for the Muslims, the path of progress and honour - the object of his existence and the purpose for his coming into this world - is solely to carry out the Will of Allah and to carry out His commands.

Nothing else. If there is to be any honour and respect, this is it. If there is to be any benefit for him, this is where it lies. For the Muslim the Holy Word of Allah and the injunctions of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) are filled with treasures of

wisdom and knowledge and therein lies the causes for prosperity and progress. But yet it is indeed amazing that in everything they look for guidance to others. They are satisfied with eating the leftovers of others. Does not this show extreme shamelessness? Does this not show them to be unacquainted with the Will of Allah and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)? Does this not show them having become estranged from Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)? Does this not seem like that patient in whose house there is an expert physician and specialist doctor who is consulted by all and sundry and yet the patient ignores him and goes to some inexperienced, ill-qualified quack for treatment?

Sayyidina Jabir (Radiallahu anhu) reports that once Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) brought a copy of the Torah from somewhere. He said: “0 Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) I have brought this copy of the Torah.” He then began to read from there. As he continued to read, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) showed great displeasure and a change appeared on his face. Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) saw this change and exclaimed to Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu): “Death unto you. Can you not see the signs of anger on the face of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)?”

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) who had been busy reading, looked up, saw the anger, and became frightened.

He started reciting the following over and over again:

أَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنْ غَضَبِ اللهِ وَغَضَبِ رَسُوْلِهِ رَضِيْنَا بِاللهِ رَبًا
وَّبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِيْنًا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) نَبِيًّا

“I seek refuge in Allah from His displeasure and from the anger of His Rasul. We are pleased with Allah as our Lord and with Islam as our deen and with Muhammed as our Nabi.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “I swear by that Being in whose Hand lies the control of the life of Mohammed, that if Sayyidina Moosa (Alayhi Salaam) should be present now and you people should leave me and follow him, you will have strayed from the straight path. If Moosa (Alayhi Salaam) had lived up to the time of my Prophethood, he would have followed me.” (Mishkat, Darmy)

The cause of the anger of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is quite clear. As long as one is not well versed and well-acquainted with the commands of the Holy Quran and the teachings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) it is not permitted to study any such book wherein truth and falsehood are intermingled. Such studies could serve to corrupt one’s faith. When however a person is proficient in the matters of his deen, he will quickly be able to recognise the difference between truth and falsehood. For such a person there is no harm if he studies anything. But (let me stress once again) for the man who has no deep knowledge and proficiency in his deen, there is the strong fear that because of his lack of knowledge, he may consider a falsehood as truth. And as such, go astray.

The Torah contains some commandments which had become abrogated and furthermore it has been changed from its original purity (through interpolations). Hence the great displeasure of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) for fear of confusion in religion. In this respect it was Ibn Seereen who said: “This is the knowledge of deen. So becareful from whom you take your deen.”

The Shaikhs and our saintly elders always forbid their followers from listening to and keeping the company of such persons whose religious condition was undesirable. They even prevented them from reading their writings so that the followers be safe from the dangerous effects of irreligion. There is a well-known saying:

أُنْظُرُوْا إِلٰى مَاقَالَ وَلَاتَنْظُرُوا إِلٰى مَنْ قَالَ

“See what he says and do not look at who says.”

To a certain extent this is true. The saying is also corroborated by some Ahaadeeth. For example, in the Hadeeth we are taught: “Wisdom is the stray animal of the believer. Wherever he finds it, let him take it.” (Jami, Mishkat, Mirquat).

However, it should be noted that this applies only in such cases where the person has the ability to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong. It applies to him who is so conversant with the principles of deen and the rules for testing speech and facts so that he may know what was said. He will have to be able to recognise whether anything said conforms to Quranic and Hadeeth teachings, Islamic law and the practice of the pious and saintly elders. As long as one is not able to make this distinction’ every speech, lecture or writing will leave some effect. This is the reason why these days, we see a person affected in a certain manner by morning and in the evening the mind is brainwashed in another way. You will notice a certain man giving a talk .and carries the crowd away with him so much so that everyone raises his hand in favour of his opinion. Another comes along, speaks so eloquently against everything the first speaker advocated, and the same audience lift their hands in his favour.

In short then, the success and prosperity of a Muslim revolves solely around obedience to the deen, the Sunnah and the practice of the saintly and pious elders. This is the thing that will be of benefit in the Hereafter. This is the Muslim’s path to progress in the world. This is the manner in which the predecessors reached the pinnacles of progress and advancement. The success they attained is clear for all to see and no one who is at all acquainted with history can deny it. Going against these things is for the Muslims the path towards destruction and failure, also loss in this world and loss in the Hereafter.

You can put forward all the proposals you want, pass all the resolutions you want; the newspapers may print all the beautiful articles they want and these may be read with all the pleasure in the world - all these are useless, in vain and of no avail. For a Muslim there is but one way of gaining success and prosperity and that is by avoiding sin, and conforming most scrupulously to the tenets of Islam. Apart from this there is no other way towards our desired destination.

Is Islam narrow-minded?

At this stage I want you to ponder over another thing. Today true Islam is being terribly treated and criticised. Those trying to be its true adherents are accused of foolishly following Islam Qf the dogmatic, bigoted fundamentalist, narrow-minded Molvis, the religion of monks who are ill-educated and one- track minded.

But let them know that those ancestors of ours who over-ran thousands of well defended forts and in the process of their endeavours brought millions into the fold of Islam, while establishing the rule of Islam all over - those brave ancestors were followers of this same so-called dogmatic, fundamentalist Islam. Yes, if you call it “narrow-mindedness”, then those brave ancestors were even more “narrow-minded” than any Molvi. In their eyes the worst possible fate awaited anyone who deviated even one inch of deen. When anyone refused to give Zakaat they were prepared to go to war against him. When anyone had the guts to consider the drinking of wine as permissible, he had to be killed. And, for drinking it, knowing it to be prohibited, he was whiplashed severely. They used to say: “Among us only such a person will refrain from Salaah who is such a hypocrite whose hypocrisy has become clear and manifest.” Even the general body of hypocrites did not dare neglect Salaah.

Among them if ever any obstacle or problem arose they would immediately seek help through Salaah. Hazrat Abu Darda, (Radiallahu anhu) reports that whenever a strong wind blew, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasaliam) immediately went into the Masjid and did not reappear until such time that the wind subsided. Many other Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) reported that it was the usual practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) that at all times o consternation, he always resorted to Salaah. They also reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said this was the general practice of the other Prophet’s (Alayhimus Salaam). There is more detail about this in my previous book - “Fazail-e-Namaaz” - Virtues of Salaah. For more elucidation, consult it.

Such were those people that during Salaah they were struck by arrows and even though hurt and with blood streaming down their bodies, they would not break off the Salaah for the great pleasure and ecstacy they experienced therein. On hearing the call to prayer they immediately closed their shops and hurried to the Mosques. During his Khilaafat, Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) sent a notice to all his governors informing them that “the most important thing to me is Salaah. Whosoever observes its due performance properly, can surely guard over the rest of his deen. And whosoever fails therein is more likely to fail in the proper performance of the rest of his deen and is more likely to allow his deen to be destroyed.”

When Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) sent Sayyidina Khalid bin Waleed (Radiallahu anhu) as commander-in-chief against the apostates -(the murtads) — he advised him: “There are five principles of’our deen — namely Kalima, Salaah, Zakaat, Fasting and Haj. Make war against anyone who denies any of these.” (Khamees)

When Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) appointed Sayyidina Utbahbin Gazwan (Radiallahu anhu) as commander of an army to Persia, he said to him:

اِتَّقِ اللهَ مَااسْتَطَعْتَ وَاحْكُمْ بِالْعَدْلِ وَصَلِّ الصَّلٰوةَ لِمِيْقَاتِهَا
وَاَكْثِرْ ذِكْرَ اللهِ

"Fear Allah as much as possible! Judge between people with justice. Perform the Salaah at their appointed times and remember Allah in Zikr excessively."

During the Khilaafat of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) the famous decisive battle of Ajnadain took place. During the course of the battle the Roman commander sent an Arab as a spy into the Muslim ranks to inquire about conditions there. The spy was asked to remain in the Muslim camp for a full day and night so as to make a proper observation. The spy, being Arab, was able to move quite freely in the Muslim camp and on returning reported his findings about the Muslims in these significant words:

بِاللَّيْلِ رُهْبَانٌ وَبِالنَّهَارِ فُرْسَانٌ وَلَوْ سَرَقَ اِبْنُ مَلِكِهِمْ قَطَعُوْهُ وَلَوْ
زَنٰى رُجِمَ لِاِقَامَةِ الْحَقِّ

"By night they are as monks (prostrating before Allah in worship) and by day they are riders on horseback (fighting in His path). If among them, the son of a king should steal, they cut off his hand. And if he commits adultery, they stone him to death and so they uphold the truth." (Khamees)

Whatever this spy reported is completely true. There is a well-known story told in the Hadeeth books. Once a lady from the tribe of Makh-zoom was guilty of theft. Because she was of high birth, some people desired that she be saved from disgrace of having her hand cut off and they tried to intercede for her by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). No one had the courage to come forward. They knew that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had great love for Sayyidina Usaama bin Zaid (Radiallahu anhu), the adopted son of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and appointed him to speak to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) on their behalf.

Usaama (Radiallahu anhu) went and spoke.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) strongly admonished him: "Do you come to intercede and make recommendations on the laws fixed by Allah?"

Thereupon Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) gave a sermon and said to all:

"The people of previous nations were destroyed for this reason that when one of "high" birth committed theft he was let off free, but when an ordinary one did so, he was punished, I swear by Allah that should Fatima the daughter of Muhammed commit theft (May Allah forbid) then her hand will be cut off."

Similar incidents are also mentioned in books of Ahaadeeth. This is the type of action which made fear settle in the hearts of the non-believers. Hence, hearing that reply from the spy, the Roman commander Heraclius sai:

إِنْ كُنْتَ صَدَقْتَنِيْ لَبَطْنُ الْأَرْضِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ لِّقَائِهَا عَلٰى ظَهْرِهَا

"If what you say is true, then it is better to be buried in the earth than to meet them in battle upon it."

At that same time there was a certain Roman prisoner in the hands of the Muslims. By chance, he managed to escape and rejoined his camp. The Roman commander, Heraclius, asked him to explain the conditions of the Muslims in full detail. He too explained in similar terms that these people are devoted worshippers of Allah by night, and valiant fighters by day. They do not even take anything from their non-Muslim subjects without paying. When they meet each other they greet each other with the word "Salaam." Heraclius heard this and said: "If that is how they are, then they will become the possessors and rulers of this land."

At the battle of Antioch, Yazid bin Abu Sufyan (Radiallahu anhu) wrote a letter to Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) to report on the battle. He started his letter thus:

أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ هِرَقْلَ مَلِكَ الرُّوْمِ لَمَّا بَلَغَهُ مَسِيْرُنَا إِلَيْهِ أَلْقَى اللهُ
الرُّعْبَ فِيْ قَلْبِهِ فَتَحَوَّلَ وَنَزَلَ إِنْطَاكِيَةَ

"I humbly report that after praises to Allah and salutation to the Prophet, that when the news of ourjourney towards him reached Heraclius, the King of Rome,.. .Allah put such a terror in his heart that hefted to avoid facing us in battle and reached Antioch."

In reply Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) wrote: "Your letter reached us wherein I became aware of the terror struck into the hearts of Heraclius. At the time when we were setting forth into battle with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) Allah also helped us by casting terror into the hearts of the enemies. And He helped us by sending down the Angels on our side. And this is that deen to which we now call the people and it is this deen which Allah is busy helping by casting terror and fear into the hearts of enemies."

(Khamees)

Heraclius had a very huge army. By comparison the Muslims were few. Sayyidina Amr bin-al-Aas (Radiallahu anhu) complained to Sayyidina Abu Baicr (Radiallahu anhu) about this. Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) wrote in reply:

"You Muslims can never be defeated because of being few in number. But because of becoming involved in sin, you will be vanquished in spite of being many in number. Hence guard yourself carefully against sin."

It is this spirit that made the Muslims conquerors over men and nations, on land and sea, over stones and trees, over birds and animals. There was victory over all.

Once a Muslim army had to set up camp in one of the wild jungles of Africa (North). This jungle was filled with dangerous wild animals. The commander Sayyidina Uqbah (Radiallahu anhu) went with a few Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu to a certain spot and made an announcement:

أَيُّهَا الْحَشَرَاتُ وَالسِّبَاعُ نَحْنُ أَصْحَابُ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَارْحَلُوْا فَإِنَّا نَازِلُوْنَ فَمَنْ وَّجَدْنَاهُ بَعْدُ قَتَلْنَاهُ

"0 you creatures living in the earth and you wild animals. We are the Companions of Rasulullah (Sallo.llahu Alayhi Wasallam). Please depart from here, for we intend camping here. Whoever of you we find here after this, we shall kill."

As this announcement was made, it was as if a bolt of lightning had travelled among the wild beasts and reptiles. Picking up their small ones they immediately departed from there. (Ishaa — at)

It was probably against the Roman Emperor of Byzantium or in some other battle that Sayyidina Safina (Radiallahu athu) once lost his way. It so happened that he came across a lion in his path. Without any fear he told the lion: "I am a Companion of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and I now face this situation." The lion wagged its tail and accompanied him like a domesticated dog. Whenever any danger lurked ahead, the lion junped ahead to dispose of the danger. The lion in this manner directed him back to his camp." (Mishkat)

On the expedition into Persia an attack was planned on Mada-in (Ctesiphon). The Muslims had to cross the River Tigris. It was during the rainy season with the river in flood. The enemy on the other side had removed all the boats etc., so as to hamper the progress of the Muslims. Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) the Muslim commander gave the order to lead their horses into the flooded river. The Muslims obeyed and in pairs of two they proceeded as the horses began to swim with ease. Sayyidina Salman Farsi (Radiallahu anhu) was the companion of Saad (Radiallahu anhu) . He reports that he heard Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) say repeatedly:

وَاللهِ لَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللهُ وَلِيَّهُ وَلَيُظْهِرَنَّ دِيْنَهُ وَلَيَهْزِمَنَّ عَدُوَّهُ مَالَمْ يَكُنْ
فِي الْجَيْشِ بَغْيٌ اَوْ ذُنُوْبٌ تَغْلِبُ الْحَسَنَاتِ

"I swear by Allah. Allah will surely help His friends and make His deen dominant, and defeat Flis enemy as long as there is not in the army an unjust one (or a fornicator) and as long as sins do not overcome good deeds." (Ishaa-at)

At the time of the campaign against the murtads (renegades), Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) sent 'Alaa Hadrami (Radiallahu anhu) with an army towards Bahrain. They happened to cross such a desert where there was no sign of water at all. The soldiers nearly died of thirst. Sayyidina'Alaa dismounted from his horse, performed two rakaahs Salaah and prayed:

يَاحَلِيْمُ يَاعَلِيْمُ يَاعَلِيُّ يَاعَظِيْمُ اَسْقِنَا

"0 Most Clement One,
0 Thou All-Knower, Most High, Most Great,
Quench Thou our thirst."

A very ordinary looking cloud appeared and it began to rain immediately, with such force that all could quench their thirst, give the animals to driniç and fill sufficiently into utensils to carry with them.

After this they set forth and discovered that the murtads had gone to take refuge at Darben. In order to reach there they had to cross a portion of sea. The murtads had already set fire to and destroyed all the boats, to close the path of the Muslims towards them.

Sayyidina ‘Alaa (Radiallahu anhu) went onto the beach, and performed two rakaahs Salaah and again prayed:

يَاحَلِيْمُ يَاعَلِيْمُ يَاعَلِيُّ يَاعَظِيْمُ أَجِزْنَا

0 Most Clement One
0 Thou All-Knower, Most High, Most Great
Make us cross the sea!”

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) says: “We walked on the water. By Allah, our feet did not even get wet, neither our socks, nor the hooves of the horses and the army contained four thousand men.” Some historians say that the water withdrew and only the feet of the camels and horses became wet. (There were four thousand men. It is quite possible that with some it happen&1 that the feet of the animals became wet whereas in the case of Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) no one’s feet became wet.)

Afif bin Munzir (Radiallahu anhu) also took part in this battle and in some lines of poetry he referred to this battle:

“See you not how Allah made the sea obedient to His Will
See you not what calamity He sent on the infidel
We called on Him who for the Israelites the sea made still,
And greater was His help to us then to Bani Israel.” (Khamees)

Many are the stories relating to crossing seas and rivers on foot. But, dear friend, these are not to be read for the derivement of enjoyment and pleasure. They should serve to make us cry over our present sorry state and misdeeds. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in his teachings taught us everything. He clearly indicated the righteous path from the evil one. Our predecessors obeyed and were highly successful. As for us, we do not appreciate his teachings, neither do we acquire lessons and warnings from the acts of those saintly ancestors, nor do we fear Allah and follow the path as laid down by His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). In fact with regard to the hopes we cherish we are like him who hopes to reap corn after having sowed barley. Whoever sows wheat will surely reap wheat.

Take any book of Islamic history and with thought and reflection study every battle. See what advice was given at the time of departing. Then study how these were acted on. For example take the expedition to Iraq. In “Stories of Sahabah” I have given an account thereof. Just look at the advice which Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) gave to

Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu). Every word of it is worth pondering over. Let me give the text of his speech:

“0 Saad, do not be arrogant over the fact that you have been called the uncle of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his companion. Allah does not wipe out evil with evil. He effaces evil with good. There is no blood- relationship between Allah and His slaves. Between them there is only a relationship of slavehood and service. The noble ones and the ordinary ones are equal in His sight. And reward from Him is only received through obedience to Him. At all times keep before your eyes the whole life of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) from the moment of his Prophethood until his death. Hold onto it and mould your life accordingly. This is my special advice to you. If you do not heed it your acts will be wasted and in vain and you will suffer tremendous loss.
I am now sending you to perform a great difficult task. You will only be able to. discharge this responsibility satisfactorily through paying heed to and following the truth. There is no other way. Hence make it a habit and the habit of your companions-in-arms to work towards righteousness. Fear Allah at all times and this fear is comprised of two things, namely, obedience to His will and avoiding sin. Whosoever has acquired within himself obedience to Allah has acquired it through dislike of the world and love for the Hereafter.’ (Ishaa-at)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself is reported to have said:
“He who loves this world will cause himself loss in the Hereafter and whosoever loves the Hereafter will suffer loss to himself in this world. So give preference to that which will remain forever (the Hereafter) over that which will perish.” (Mishkat)

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma) understood this general principle quite well and held onto it. It is thus true that the man who is prepared to give preference to the Hereafter over this worldly life and is prepared to suffer worldly loss does not in reality suffer real loss in this world. He will surely revive that which had been pre-ordained for him.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “For him who desires the Hereafter and strives for it, Allah will place contentment in his heart, corn pose his divergent activities into one and the world is made to appear despicable in his eyes. And whoever intends to acquire worldly riches, poverty will stare him in the face, his affairs will remain in disarray and confusion and he will not receive more than is ordained for him.” (Mishkat)

Subservience of Animals to the Saints of Allah and Fruits of Obediance.

Hence stories of the lives of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma) and the saints have reached us in most authentic fashion showing how the world became completely despicable before them and still comes to them like that. And why should it not be so when the world and everything else had been created for them?

Once Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) appointed Sayyidina ‘Asim bin Amr (Radiallahu anhu) the commander of a small army to attack Maysaan.’Asim (Radiallahu anhu)

reached the place. At that time the food supply of the Muslims was completely exhausted. They could not get anything from anywhere. At the edge of the woods they met a Persian cowherd. They inquired from him whether there was a possibility of getting any milk or beasts of burden anywhere. He lied that he did not know. From inside the woods an ox shouted for all to hear:

كَذَبَ عَدُوُّ اللهِ هَا نَحْنُ

He lies. This enemy of Allah! We are here!"

Hearing this voice, Sayyidina'Asim (Radiallahu anhu) entered the woods, brought out the animals and distributed them among the soldiers. (Some historians are of the opinion that this happened to Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) himself at the time of the Battle of Qadisia. It is however quite possible that it could have happened twice.)

During the time of Hajjaaj bin Yusuf this story was told to him. He was quite amazed. He then called some people who had been witnesses of the incident. They confirmed the truth thereof. They explained that they themselves had heard the voice of the ox. Hajjaaj then asked: ''What did the people (present at that time) think of this happening?"

They replied: "The people took this incident as proof that Allah was pleased with the Muslims and that victory was on their side."

Hajjaaj repiied: "That would only be the case if all the soldiers in the army had been Allah-fearing and righteous."

فَأَمَّا رَأَيْنَا فَمَا رَأَيْنَا قَطُّ أَزْهَدَ فِيْ دُنْيَا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا أَشَدَّ بُغْضًا لَهَا
لَيْسَ فِيْهِمْ جَبَانٌ وَلَاغَالٌّ وَلَاغَدَّارٌ

The people said: "We are not acquainted with what lay in the hearts of the soldiers. But whatever we could perceive outwardly we know and this is that we never saw more pious men than those. We have never seen men who disliked wordly riches more than them. There was not a single man among them who was a coward, or acted deceitfully or treacherously."

In this story we read of the speaking of animals before the saints of Allah and their offering itselves to them. This must not be looked upon as impossible. In Sahih and other Hadeeth books there is the story of a man who was leading a cow somewhere. He became tired and mounted the cow. Thereupon the cow began speaking. "We have not been created for this. We have been created for farming." The people, upon hearing this, were amazed.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "I as, well as Abu Bakr, and Umar believe in the truth of this."

Once a man was grazing some goats. A wolf came along and snatched one goat. The shepherd made a big noise about it. Then the wolf said: "Who will guard these goats on the Day of the Beast, near the Day of Qiyamat?" People were quite astonished at the

utterance of this wolf. Then too Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) uttered the same words: “I and Abu Bakr and Umar believe this.” (Mishkat, Bukhari, Muslim).

There are also numerous incidents in the books of miracles that animals bore witness to the fact that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was Allah’s Messenger. They even taunted people for not believing. If you wish to know more thereof I suggest you check in ‘Shifa’ of Qazi Ayaz who also mentioned some similar incidents.

The second pan of this story (of the talking ox) who offered himself, is also quite understandable. These soldiers were at all times ready and eager to become martyrs in Allah’s path. And as the saying goes:
“As you treat others, so will you be treated.”

Persian couplet:

كَمَا تَدِيْنُ تُدَانُ

“Withdraw not your neck from the Ruler’s command so that none may withdraw his neck from your demand.” (Saadi)

The books of history bear witness to the great zeal for martyrdom of these soldiers of Islam. In ‘Stories of Sahabah’ I have penned down some specimen of stories of this zeal. If you wish refer to it.

During the farewell Haj, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) slaughtered one hundred camels. While he was busy slaughtering the animals, five or six camels came forward on their own accord pressing to be slaughtered before the others. This story is told in the Sahih of Abu Dawood. In this world we see ordinary rulers - helpless rulers - who possess no real power supporting and protecting their subjects. So why should not Allah grant support to those who obey Him diligently? In fact in the Quran we have the promise:

يَاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اِنْ تَنْصُرُوْا اللّٰهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ

“0 you who believe, if you help Allah, Allah will surely help you.”

(47.7)

اِنْ يَّنْصُرْكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَلَاغَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَاِنْ يَّخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَاالَّذِىْ
يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهٖ

If Allah helps you, none shall overcome you, and if He should withdraw His help from you, then who will be your helper after Him?” (3. 160)

Fruits of Disobedience

This was very well understood by the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). Hence obedience to Allah was second nature to them. Success was with them and in all ways were they helped. And whenever there were any faults on their part they suffered according to their status.

The happenings at the Battle of Uhud is well-known. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) placed some men at a strategic spot with the express command that they do not move from there at all costs, whether they overcame the enemy or were overcome. It so happened that the Muslims were winning the battle. When they had practically defeated the enemy, many of those men who were strategically placed reasoned that now the battle has for all intents and purposes been won. They thus left their positions. This gave the opportunity for Khalid bin Walid, a commander of the enemy at that time, to come through that gap and attack the Muslims from the rear. The ensuing results were quite disastrous for the Muslims.

Then there is the story of the battle of Hunain. Because the Muslims were many in numler compared to the enemy, some Muslims were quite proud of their numbers. The result was that the Muslims had to suffer distress and difficulty. In the Quran, Allah refers to this incident:

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللهُ فِيْ مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيْرَةٍ وَّيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ اِذْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ
كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا وَّضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْاَرْضُ بِمَا
رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُّدْبِرِيْنَ

"Indeed Allah has given you victory in many battles and on the Day of Hunain when you prided yourself in your numbers. But it availed you not, and the earth with all its vastness, became narrowed for you. And then you turned your backs and fled." (9. 25)

Displeasure at the slightest contravention of Shariat

At the time of apostasy, when many turned away from Islam after the demise of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), battles had to be fought against those murtads. The first battle was against Tulayha the liar (one of those who claimed prophethood). In this battle many were killed and many of the enemy including Tulayha fled from the field. This gave the Muslims a lot of courage and confidence. Thereafter they engaged the forces of Musailama in battle. This was a fierce and very hard-fought battle in which thousands were killed among the enemy. Many Muslims too became martyrs in the path of Allah. Sayyidina Khalid bin Waleed (Radiallahu anhu) was the commander of the Muslim forces. He says:

اِنَّا لَمَّا فَرَغْنَا مِنْ طُلَيْحَةَ الْكَذَّابِ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ شَوْكَةٌ قُلْتُ كَلِمَةً
وَالْبَلَاءُ مُوَكَّلٌ بِالْقَوْلِ وَمَابَنُو حَنِيْفَةَ مَا هِيَ اِلَّا كَمَنْ لَقِيْنَا فَلَقِيْنَا
قَوْمًا يَشْبَهُوْنَ اَحَدًا وَلَقَدْ صَبَرُوْا لَنَا مِنْ حِيْنَ طَلَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ
اِلَى صَلٰوةِ الْعَصْرِ

"When we finished off Tulayha the liar - and there was hardly any glory for him - a word came out of my mouth and behold! misfortune is attached to speech. I said: What is so wonderful about Bani Hanifa? They are just like those whom we had already finished off But when we met them in battle we found them not like any other enemy. So valiantly they fought that they kept us engaged in fierce battle from sunrise till the time of Asr Salaah."

Sayyidina Khalid (Radiallahu anhu) says here that because of an undesirable word that escaped from his mouth they had to fight a fierce battle. That is why the earlier Khulafaa took such great care of even the smallest things and warned against treating it lightly.

When the Battle of Yarmuk took place, Khalid (Radiallahu anhu) was on a campaign in Iraq. Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) sent him a letter to put his second-in-command in charge and to proceed immediately to assist the Muslim forces at Yarmuk. In the same letter, having commended him and having congratulated him, he advised Khalid (Radiallahu anhu):.

وَلَايَدْخُلَنَّكَ عُجْبٌ فَتَخْسَرَ وَتُخْذَلَ وَإِيَّاكَ اَنْ تُدِلَّ بِعَمَلٍ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ
تَعَالٰى لَهُ الْمَنُّ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّ الْجَزَاءِ

"Never allow pride of your achievements to enter into your heart. If so, then you will suffer loss and humiliation. And be not proud of any achievement of yours. Remember it is a special favour from Allah and He alone is owner of reward." (Khamees).

These illustrious men - in their writings and sermons - u d to warn even against the smallest and seemingly insignificant things. They used to reprimand against sin in the most severe terms. Every single student of history - friend or foe, Muslim or non-Muslim are quite aware of the heroic achievements of Sayyidina Khalid bin Waleed (Radiallahu anhu). During the Khilaafat of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) insisted strongly that Khalid (Radiallahu anhu) should be relieved of his post as commander of the Muslim forces. Hazrat Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) did not accept Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu's) opinion. Later during the Khilaafat of Umar (Radiallahu anhu) an incident took place when Khalid (Radiallahu anhu) was supposed to have given a big sum of money as a present to a poet. Because of this he was recalled to Medina to be brought thither with bounded hands.

When Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) went to Jerusalem for the first time, he sent a message to the generals of the Muslim armies. They were to appoint their second-in-command in their places and to travel to Jabia to meet him. They all came. The first to come to meet him were Yazid bin Abi Sufyan, Abu Ubaydah and Khalid (Radiallahu anhum). All of them were dressed in silken clothing. When Umar (Radiallahu anhu) saw them he dismounted. In anger he picked up stones and threw it at them, shouting at them:

"Is it not shameful that so soon you have changed from your previous condition and now come to meet me like this? It is but a mere two years that have passed and this is what has already happened!! Even if after leadership of two hundred years you change and become like this, I will surely appoint other commanders in your places!" The commanders replied: "0 Ameerul Mumineen, it may be as you say, but be assured that under these clothes we Such was the righteous attitude and so-called "narrow-mindedness" of these are wearing our battle dress and weapons." (Tabari)

The question of wearing silk clothing is a discussion on its own. There are even some cases when its use is permissible.

When Maysaan was conquered Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) appointed

Nu'maan bin'Adee (Radiallahu anhu) as its governor. Nu'maan (Radiallahu anhu) intended taking his wife with him to Maysaan but she would not go. Later (in order to encourage her to join him there) he sent her a letter wherein in lines of poetry he praised the luxuries and the pleasures and joys of life there. In this letter in poetic metaphorical terms he even praised the wine and the beautiful wine-goblets found there. Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) came to hear of this letter. He sent a letter to Nu'maan (Radiallahu anhu). In it he first of all quoted the first four verses from Surah Ghaafir:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ، غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ شَدِيْدِ
الْعِقَابِ ذِيْ الطَّوْلِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ اِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ

"The Forgiver of sins, who accepts repentance (and) is strict in punishment And hath a long reach (in all things). There is no Allah but He, to Him is the final goal." (40.3)

Then he continued: "Certain lines of poetry written by you have reached me. Please know that I have dismissed you from office."

Later Nu'maan appeared before Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and said: "I swear by Allah that I have never drunk a drop of wine. Whatever was by me, was only written in poetic fashion."

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) replied: "I believe you. That is also the good thoughts I believed about you and your character. However never again I will make you governor of any land." (Majmau - Buldan)

Such was the righteous attitude and so-called "narrow mindedness" of these predecessors of ours. And in the pages of Islamic history you will surely find many more examples thereof.

But let it be known that this was the cause for their progress in both the spiritual and mundane fields. Whenever there was any slip, they suffered some form of loss. About this you have already read above.

Together with that we should also remember that in the case of those among the high class of personalities, Allah admonishes and punishes even the ordinary faults quite severely. This is in accordance with the dictum:

حَسَنَاتُ الْأَبْرَارِ سَيِّئَاتُ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ

"If, some of the deeds, which are generally considered good deeds when done by an ordinary righteous Muslim, emanate from one of the favourires of Allah, it is considered a fault."

That is, the deed which is not really evil, but pardonable if coming from the ordinary Muslim, is often considered punishable if it comes from one of the chosen favourites of Allah.

In Suratul A'bas a strict warning is given as to why a rich man was shown any favour over a poor blind man, even though this preference was actually shown with the object of furthering the cause of deen **

On the other hand in dealing with the general society, ordinary faults would have been considerably overlooked and would only be punished when such sins became numerous.

In this respect we have the story of the well-known island of Sardinia. It was conquered in the year 90 A.H. With regard to booty captured in the war, many dishonest acts occured. Whatever anyone could lay his hands upon were stolen. After the completion of the conquest, the conquerors were returing to their ship when a voice from the unseen said:

اَللّٰهُمَّ غَرِّقْهُمْ

"O Allah, drown them" (ishaa-at)

Soon they were all drowned.

Well there are the sayings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) which we mentioned at the beginning of this article and now I have mentioned some examples from history. The pages of history are full of such examples. But what happens today is only too clear for all to see.

We are with our own hands choosing the path leading to irreligiousness and we are blatantly indulging in all types of vices. The result is that our anxieties and problems are increasing and our condition is continuously worsening. Worse than that, situations have arisen when en bloc and collectively Islam is being cast aside. Such is the situation that each and every part of Islam is being discarded. If any solution should present itself, it will only lie in being steadfast in our deen and in avoiding sin.
But saying such a thing today, presenting such a solution today is looked upon as old-fashioned, out-of-date conservatism. Who will stand up and say it?

فَإِلَى اللهِ الْمُشْتَكىٰ وَالْمُسْتَعَانُ

"So unto Allah is my complaint and from Him I seek help."

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** Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was explaining some verses to Abu Jahi in order to call him to Islam, when a poor blind man came along, asking to be told about Islam. it so happen ed that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) exhibited a frown on his face in what seemed like displeasure at being interrupted. Thereupon Allah revealed Surah A'bas to admonish the Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)

QUESTION 5:

Question: "Selfish personal motives play a part in people's actions and intentions and it seems as if everyone are following their own desires."

Sincerity in actions and Deeds

Answer: It is not inconceivable that some people are as you point out. If not all, then there are surely some who do things in obedience to their desires.

But of course this is also the result of discarding the teachings of Islam. If we should accept and act according to our Islamic teachings then not one of those evil consequences will appear. There is no doubt whatsoever that whoever performs any religious duty to satisfy his desires and ego does great harm to himself. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِامْرِئٍ مَّا نَوَىٰ

"Verily the reward of deeds are determined by the intentions and for everyone shall be only that which he intended."

When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) sent Sayyidina Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu) to Yemen, Ma'az (Radiallahu anhu) asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) to give him some advice. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) advised him to be sincere at all times, saying:

"Even a few deeds of righteousness done in sincerity will suffice."

In another Hadeeth it has been reported: "Allah's mercy be upon the sincere ones. They are the lamps of guidance and through them every darkening fitnah is dispelled."

The famous Sahabi Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) once became quite worried about his actions. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) admonished him and said: "Allah helps this U mmat through the weak one's, tkrough their Salaah, their duas and their sincerity."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is also reported to have said: "Allah does not look at your physical appearance and forms. He looks at your hearts and intentions."

In other words, He judges you according to the deeds you do and the intentions which prompt those actions.

There is a verse of the Holy Quran, already quoted in this book previously, wherein Allah Ta'aala says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِيْنَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيْهَا وَهُمْ
فِيْهَا لَا يُبْخَسُوْنَ ، أُوْلٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ
وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوْا فِيْهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ

"Those who desire the life of the present and its glitter - to them We shall pay the price of their deeds therein, without dimunition. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the fire: Vain are the designs they frame therein and of no effect are the deeds they do..." (11.15-16)

In support of this there are numerous Ahaadeeth to the effect that whosoever desires as his major aim the pleasures of this world, Allah will cause him to face great anxiety and worry and cause his problems to stare him in the face at all times. And vhomsoever desires as his major aim the attainment of success of the Hereafter, Allah will help him,

cause independence to fill his heart and the world will offer itself to him in a despicable state.

According to another Hadeeth Allah says: “0 Children of Adam! Free yourself of all duties to serve Me and I will fill your hearts with independence of others and cause your worries to disappear. Otherwise, I will fill your hearts with continuous pre-occupations and not let your worries leave you.” (Targheeb)

It thus becomes quite clear that all those people who desire only worldly benefits and strive only to attain these useless benefits, have wasted their valuable time and effort.

Sayyidina Ka’ab (Radiallahu anhu) reports that Rasuluilah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Give glad tidings to the Ummat and they shall attain glory, devotion to their deen, high rank and conquest of the land. However, the person who will perform the deeds of the Hereafter for the sake of attaining worldly gain, for him there shall be no share of glory of the Hereafter.”

A certain Sahabi once told Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): “When I rise to perform some act (of righteousness) I find within myself the intention to please Allah as well as this that my name should be noted. (Where do I stand)?” Hearing this Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) remained silent until the verse from the Quran was revealed:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ
رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

“And whosoever desires to meet his Lord, let him work deeds of righteousness and not associate any partner unto Allah in his worship.” (Kahf) (18.110)

From the Hadeeth we are taught: “When anyone performs any deed for show or fame, Allah will, on the Day of Qiyamat, cause him to become famous (in that his bad intention will become known to all) and will cause him to be humiliated and despised.”

The Hadeeth also teaches that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “The greatest fear that I have on your behalf is for the minor “shirk” (the minor worship of another diety). The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma) inquired: “And what is this minor shirk?”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “It is to do deeds for show so that it may be seen by others.”

On the Day of Qiyamat Allah will say to such people: “Go and seek your reward from those (to) whom you wanted to show your deeds.” (Targheeb)

We are also taught in numerous Hadeeth that all those deeds, done with the intent of gaining name and fame or where the aim is to acquire wealth or worldly benefit, and where there is no aim to please Allah, are all useless, fruitless and in vain. In fact instead of being a cause of benefit, they cause the doer untold harm. Shortly before this we have

dealt with Jihad and mentioned some Ahaadeeth connected with this subject of niyyat. There we discussed Hadeeth:

“The Jihad wherein the object is to attain name and fame is not acceptable by Allah.”

A certain Sahabi once passed by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Noticing the strength of his body and fine figure and posture the Sahabah remarked: “How wonderful it would be if in this state he should go for Jihad, in the path of Allah?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “If this man should go forth in order to (work and) maintain and support his minor children, he strives in the Path of Allah. And if he goes forth to support his elderly parents, he also strives in the Path of Allah. And if he goes forth to acquire (that whereby he sees to) his own daily necessities and to save himself from consuming (and performing) that which is prohibited, he is also in the Path of Allah. However, if he sets forth for fame or for show to be seen by others, he is in the path of Shaytaan.” (Targheeb)

This Hadeeth and other similar Ahaadeeth clearly show that striving in the Path of Allah is not only confined to actual Jihad. or non-obligatory acts or specific forms of worship. No, apart from the obligatory acts and deeds of righteousness, any other righteous deed done with good intention for the pleasure of Allah falls in the Path of Allah.

Anyone thinkipg that devotion to deen lies only in being busy with Ibaadah or thinking that to be involved in worldly affairs is the opposite to devotion of deen, makes a grave mistake. Not one of the authoritive Ulema has ever said that one should not seek the necessary means of one’s livelihood or that one should discard looking for such means. But this is important: One should not make the acquisition of worldly things one’s objective in life. One should seek those necessities for Allah’s sake and according to His stipulated rules and regulations. Never should one work to acquire fame, high rank for the sake of boasting and then to become proud and arrogant, or to become noted in the eyes of men.

Having said that, there is another side of the story. It is completely wrong and against Islamic teachings to say that everyone is doing things for ‘‘selfish personal motives” and “following his own desires.”

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ
وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا

Allah says: 0 you who believe, avoid susptcion as much as possible for suspicion in some cases is sin and spy not on each other; Nor speak ill of each other behind their backs.

(49.12)

Political parties and dishonoring of Muslims.

We have a strange habit. Whenever anyone does things according to our liking, he is looked upon as being a sincere and devoted man, Allah-fearing and pious. But as soon as we see any deed coming from him which is not in accordance with our fancies, he becomes accused of being a fool, a lover of the English, a pro-Hindu fanatic, a selfish lover of himself, a traitor to the nation, a deceiver, a cheat, a paid recipient of English money, a paid servant of the Congress Party. In short all the evils of the world are heaped upon him. Such a person finds all his real faults exposed to all, and non-existent imagined defects are discovered in him. This is what happens and is completely contrary to what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

“For him who hides the faults of others, Allah will hide his faults. And when anyone exposes the faults of another, Allah will expose his faults, so much so that even if in the most hidden circles he secretly commits sins, disgrace will come to him.”

Sayyidina Ibn Umar (Radiallahu anhu) relates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once ascended the Mimbar and in a loud voice exclaimed: “0 those people who have Is lam on their tongues while true faith has not yet touched their hearts! Do not persecute the Muslims and do not set about searching for their faults. For that person who searches for the faults of a Muslim, Allah will bring his own faults to light. And when Allah desires to uncover the faults of anyone, He causes him to be disgraced even within the security of his own home.” (Targheeb)

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) once looked at the Baitullah and having looked, remarked: “What a blessed and respect-worthy house You are! But in the eyes of Allah the honour of a Muslim is much more than You.” (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Do not ever show pleasure at the misfortune suffered by a brother; otherwise Allah will show mercy to him and cause you to suffer that same misfortune.’ ‘(Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “The people most dear to me are those who are amiable and pleasant in manner, who keep their arms tender (and do not roll up their sleeves, ready for fighting over minor issues), who easily make friends and spread good relations between others. And the people most disliked by me are those who carry tales and spread gossip, who bring about splits and differences between friends and who find (non-existent) faults in people who are innocent (of those faults).’ ‘(Targheeb)

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Whenever any man defames and accuses you of any fault that lies not within you, then do not defame him for a fault which in reality is in him. For that you shall be rewarded and on him will be the evil burden of his defamation.” (Targheeb)

“Do not sever mutual relations with each other; do not turn your backs upon each other; do not harbour hatred in your hearts against each other; do not envy each other. Live with

each other as brothers. It is not permissible for any Muslim to cut off speaking with another for more than three days.” (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) further said: “The deeds (of men) are presented before Allah every Monday and Thursday, and pardon is granted for all sins except for him who was guilty of associating any other god with Allah. As for those two persons between whom there is enmity and hatred, it is said: “Withhold pardon from them until such time that they become reconciled with each other (and resume friendly relations).” (Bukhari, Targheeb)

The Hadeeth also says: “When anyone calls another Kaafir or any enemy of Allah, and that (accused) person is not like that, the words of defamation return to the speaker.” (Bukhari, Targheeb)

And also: ‘‘It is an act of iniquity to abuse a Muslim.”
And also: ‘‘To abuse and swear at a Muslim is to prepare for one’s own destruction.” (Targheeb)

Further, it is also stated in the Hadeeth: “When any person accuses another of anything which in reality is not in him, Allah will chain that defamer in hell and say to him: “Prove the truth of your statement.” (Targheeb)

According to another Hadeeth. “The best of servants (of Allah) are those who, when seen, the remembrance of Allah becomes refreshed. And the worst of servants are those who carry tales and spread gossip, create splits and dissention between friends and seek out faults in people of which they are innocent.” (Targheeb)

On the occasion of his Farewell Pilgrimage Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) announced: “Your blood, your honour and your possessions are sacred and unlawful to each other now and forever, even as they are sacred and unlawful in this Sacred City, in this Sacred Month and on this Sacred Day.”

“A Muslim’s life, wealth and honour is unlawful for another Muslim.”

“To dishonour a Muslim is tantamount to taking the highest form of usury.”

Numerous Ahaadeeth in various different wordings have been reported on this subject. Some of these have already been quoted on previous pages. It is a serious affair. But for us it seems like an easy matter. For a very minor thing or at times merely on suspicion, we have no qualms about defaming, deriding and dishonouring others. In the eyes of Allah this dishonouring and disrespectful abuse of a Muslim is such an evil deed that it has been compared with the worst form of usury. Just imagine! There is not only one Hadeeth stating this, but many. In one Hadeeth it is said: “The worst form of usury is to degrade aMuslim over another with abuse.” (Jami)

That means to deride the dignity of one so that the othcr may be enhanced.

The Political Parties and the Dishonouring of Muslims

Take a thoughtful look at the number of parties that have sprung up amongst us today. Look with fairness at these parties - political and non-political.

Then see how many of the rank and file members of these parties shower abuse upon the leaders of opposing parties - whether those leaders are Ulema or not. You will see them abusing and degrading those leaders simply with the object of destroying their reputation, dignity and standing with the public, so that the dignity and position of their own party be advanced.

The most amazing thing in this whole situation is that everyone involved consider this a bad thing and does not refrain from saying so. They even complain against the abuses thrown by the other side, but at the same time they do not search in their own midst and fail to see and hear the deeds and words of abuse from their own followers.

Persian Couplet:

"They do not with honesty admit that this is a crime committed even in their own backyards."

It reminds us of the Hadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

يَبْصُرُ اَحَدُكُمُ الْقَذٰى فِيْ عَيْنِ اَخِيْهِ وَيَنْسَى الْجِذْعَ فِيْ عَيْنِهٖ

"Some among you notice the mote in the eye of his brother and sees not the beam in his own eyes."

Listen to me and listen attentively! This is a serious matter! Degrading and abusing a Muslim is a matter most severe in the eyes of Allah. Great and grave warnings have been given against such things. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "To attack the honour of a Muslim without right is the worst form of usury." (Jami)

"Without right" in this Hadeeth means that in the cases where the Shariat gave permission, it is permissible. And in cases where the Shariat did not give permission, it is considered to be "without right."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "The simplest form of usury is tantamount to committing incest with one's own mother and the worst form of usury is to attack the reputation and honour of a Muslim." (Jami)

One Hadeeth states that there are seventy-two grades of usury. The lightest of these is similar in sin to having committed fornication with ones own mother, and the worst form of it is the dishonouring of a Muslim.

Another Hadeeth says that to degrade and abuse a Muslim is one of the great sins and to utter two abusive words after having been sworn at once, is also a major sin. (Jami)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “When my Ummat shall begin to swear at each other (with abusive words) it will become lowered in the sight of Allah.” (Risalah-Tableegh)

So much was Rasulullah (Saliallahu Alayhi Wasallam)’s concern in this respect that he even commanded that the (minor) slips and faults of the elders be overlooked. Hence he is reported to have said: “Overlook the lapses of the men of status, except in the case of hudood.”

أَقِيْلُوا ذَوِى الْهَيْئَاتِ عَثَرَاتِهِمْ إِلَّا الْحُدُوْدَ

Here we are commanded to overlook the genuine faults of such men. However as for the hudood, i.e. those cases where they are guilty of such crimes as fornication, adultery, theft, where some form of corporal punishment has to be meted out after proper investigation and proof, no one should receive any preferential treatment. On the other hand, it is not permissible, merely on the basis of suspicion and conjecture in the absence of any solid, legally acceptable proof, to accuse anyone. In Surah Noor, it is clearly stated that, in the case of adultery, if the accuser does not come forth with four eyewitnesses, then, according ó Islamic Canon Law of Evidence, the accusation is considered to be unfounied and thus false. That is the Quran. But let us look at ourselves. When we harbour within ourselves personal animosity against anyone, then according to our own liking we can get the dirtiest cartoon against him. Whatever evil we want to write about him we can search for. To call this “enemy” of ours an adulterer or a drunkard is nothing in our eye.

Look at what the the Shariat says: If one cannot bring forth four eye-witnesses of someone’s having committed adultery, the accuser should be beaten eighty times as punishment. But as for us, we do not even bother about witnesses when we want to accuse.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Sometimc Shaytaan also appears in human form to spread lies. The congregation hears it and disperses to all corners spreading the same lie, telling each other “I have heard this story from a certain man. I do not know his name but will be able to recognise his face.” (Mishkat, Muslim)

Thus, one should be careful. It is a great injustice to believe the subject matter of any story after having heard it from an unknown person in some gathering. It is wrong to believe such things until such time that according to the Islamic law of evidence such a story (and the telling thereof) has been tested. It is a completely different matter to take the precautionary measure to avoid contact with such an accused. But to pass judgement on him (without verification) is wrong.
Please understand this well. To remain aloof from such an accused or to expel him from your circle is feasible as a precautionary measure, for the sake of proper administration and for political reasor1. But when it comes to an actual charge against him legal proof is required. We know that such supposed allegations are often invented individually by someone or collectively (and purposefully) by some party to degrade the accused. It is often done out of envy and jealousy because one does not want to see the other making any progress.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Malice and jealousy devour good deeds as fire devours fuel.” (Jami)

If these people who are so ready to defame and accuse others would only reflect on the sayings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in this regard, they will surely come to know that they only do great harm to themselves. Whatever they do to others will certainly be done to them. For Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

كَمَا تُدِيْنُ تُدَانُ

As you do to others so shall be done to you.”(Maqousid-e-Hasanah)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Goodness never becomes old; sin is never forgotten, and Allah, the Compensator never dies. Do whatever you wish, for as you do to others, so shall be done to you.”

In another Hadeeth it is quoted from the Torah: “As you sow, so shall you reap. From the cup that you give others to drink, will you be made to drink.” (Maqousid-e-Hasanah)

Another Hadeeth quotes from the Injeel: “As you do, so will be done to you. And with the scale that you weigh to give others, will you be weighed.” (Jami — Sagheer)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: That man who refuses help to a Muslim, at such time when he is being humiliated and insulted, Allah will leave him helpless and unaided at such time when he is greatly in need of a helper. And for him who comes to the support of a Muslim at such a time when he is being humiliated and insulted, Allah will come to his aid at such a time when he is greatly in need of a helper.” (Mishkat)

Sayyidina Abu Zar Ghaffari (Radiallahu anhu) is one of the most well-known Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu). There is a lengthy Hadeeth reported by him at the end of which is the following. He requested Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) to give him advice. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said to him in reply: “I advice you to have the fear of Allah at all times. It is an adornment for all things. (Surely if a man fears Allah in all affairs he will not become involved in sinful acts of calamities).”

Hazrat Abu Zar (Radiallahu anhu) asked: “Advise me more.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Recite the Holy Quran and remember Allah (in Zikr) excessively. This will cause you to be remembered in the heavens and will be âcause for light for you on earth.”
Hazrat Abu Zar (Radiallahu anhu) again asked: “Advise me more.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Observe silence often for this wards off the Shaytaan (as man is often involved in problems through his tongue). Silence assists in the observance of deeni affairs (and whomsoever suffers from the disease of excessive talk deprives himself of good works).”

Hazrat Abu Zar (Radiallahu anhu) again asked: “Advise me more.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Refrain from excessive laughter for that kills the (spiritual) heart and causes the light of the face to depart.”

Again Hazrat Abu Zar (Radiallahu anhu) asked: “Advise me more.”

Rasulullali (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Speak the truth at all times even though it be bitter.”

When Hazrat Abu Zar (Radiallahu anhu) again asked for more Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Take notice of your faults for this will prevent you from noticing the faults of others.” (Mishkat)

My object in penning down these last few lines is to point out our folly. We are at all times searching for the faults of others. If we cast a look at ourselves and do a bit of self-examination, neither will we find the time to discuss the faults of others, nor will we have the courage to spread their faults far and wide. We will then be only too occupied with our own iniquities.

In the testament (wassiyyat-nama) of Maulana Raipuri we find the following Persian Couplet:

مرا پیر دانائے مرشد شہاب ؛ دو اندرز فرمود بر روئے آب
یکے آنکہ بر خویش خود بیں مباش ؛ دگر آنکہ بر غیر بدبیں مباش

“While on board at sea, Shahab, my Sheikh, gave me two advices which were most precious to me: One: that you be not filled with your ego and Two: do not look for the faults in others.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once gave some advice to Sayyidina Ma’az (Radjallahu anhu). Then he said to him: “And now, after all that, shall I tell you that whereby it will be easy for you to act on these?”

Ma’az (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Yes, indeed, do tell me.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) then pointed towards his tongue and said: “This is it. Keep it under control.” (Mishkat)

Sayyidina Ma’az (Radiallahu anhu) asked: “0 Messenger of Allah! Will we be called to account for our tongues also?”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Is there anything else except the heaps of the tongue that causes a man to be cast on his face into hell?” (Mishkat, Haakim)

By the “heaps of the tongue” is meant that just as the sickle cuts the crop and makes heaps in places, so the scissors of the tongue also clips talks and accumulates them in one place viz, the book of one’s deeds.

It is true that just as we are very umnindful of our duties in our deen, so too are we very careless and negligent about the tongue. The tongue is of exceptional importance. But still we do not keep it under control. Such are we that whatever comes into our heart we do not hesitate to utter against anyone. We do not even pay attention to the fact that one day we will have to prove the allegations in the court of the great Judge. Such are we that we undauntedly accuse anyone of being a recipient of money from the English or a spy for the secret police, or a hireling in the service of the Congress Party.

Look at what Allah says:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا وَ لَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ، ذَٰلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ

"0 man, do not follow that whereof you have no knowledge. Verily the hearing and the sight and the heart-of each of these will be asked. And walk not in the land exultant. Surely you cannot split the earth nor can you reach the mountains in height. The evil of all that is hatefid in Allah's sight. This (0 Muhammed) is part of that wisdom which we revealed to you." (17.36-39)

In this verse there is an order to be careful of the part played in life by the eyes, ears and the heart. It is an act of injustice to oneself to keep in the heart any unproved opinion against anyone. Thus to consider anyone who disagrees with our opinions, worthy of criticism, or to insult him as such or to call him a lover of status, rank and position is something for which one will have to account. Is it not possible that in his view according to deen the best way and welfare of the Muslims lies in the path he chooses? We admit that in your own opinion that is a dangerous path, liable to bring with it great loss. You should at least also admit that you too have not received divine revelation from Allah to show that you are infallibly on the right path.

The possibility of both being wrong exists. Even if it is fixed that the path you tread alone is correct, it does not stand to reason that the other man chose his path out of evil intentions or selfish, personal reasons.

There is even the possibility of error in the field of Ijtihaad - (the system of exerting oneself jurisdically in order to reach a correct conclusion). Hence when one disagrees with anyone on any point it is one's duty to explain the truth (according to you) to him in the true amicable Islamic fashion, as is the way of a Muslim - not to heap insults on your adversary or to criticise him for faults real or false, nor to slander, backbite and attack.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا

Allah says: "And those who malign Allah and the believing men and women underservedly, bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin." (33.58)

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) inquired: “Do you know who is the bankrupt man?” The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) replied: “It is that person among us who has no possessions.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “The indigent and bankrupt one of this Ummat is that man who on the day of Qiyamat will appear with much in the way of Salaah, Zakaat, Fasting and other forms of Ibaadah. However he had insulted this one, slandered that one, devoured someone’s wealth unjustly, had killed someone else or beaten someone else. And now some of his good deeds are taken by this one and some by that one. And then when his supply of good deeds have been exhausted, while some people’s demands are yet unsettled, then according to those demands, their sins are being heaped upon his shoulders. This is the real indigent bankrupt one.”

Yes such is the real indigent one. How unfortunate! Look with what righteous deeds he appeared there but in the end all that was taken away, leaving him with nothing. Instead even the sins of others fell upon him.

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Do you know what back-biting is?”

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) replied: “Allah and His messenger knows best.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “It means to mention such a thing about your brother which he dislikes.”
The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu) asked: “But what if that fault is really present in him?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Then it is indeed backbiting. And if that fault is not in him it is not bpkbiting but slander.” (Targheeb)

This should be noted: If a person’s fault is mentioned just for the sake of advertising his faults, it is haraam and sinful. However if it is necessary to point out his fault for some religious reason or for some expedience, then it is not. But to mention anything of which he is not guilty is not permissible at all.

According to one Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:
“When a man speaks such a thing about a Muslim which is not in him (of which he is not guilty), Allah will imprison him in that part of hell where the sweat, blood and pus of the inmates of hell accumulate.” (Targheeb)

It is true that we do not have our tongues under control. Whatever we like to speak about somebody, we express without any second thoughts. We must be very careful. Control over the tongue is very important. A certain Sahabi once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) “Pray, teach me something which I may hold onto firmly.”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) pointing towards his tongue said. “Be the master of this at all times.”

Another Sahabi asked: “Against what shall I protect myself?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “For the people who jeer and scoff at others Allah will on the Day of Judgement open up a door of Paradise, and each of them will be called to come there quickly. When they shall with great difficulty arrive near there because of the great calamity which they will suffer, the door will quickly be closed upon them. Another will open and they will be called thither. When again after great difficulty they reach there, it too will be closed upon them. A third door will open. And the same will happen. This will continue to happen until greatly frustrated and disappointed they will not have the courage to go towards the door.” (Targheeb)

This is the punishment meted out to those who poke fun at and play the fool with a Muslim. They too will suffer the same lot. Those people who poke fun at Muslims after differing from them in simple matters, those who satirically portray them in cartoons which they publish, those who,write satirical poems against them, should seriously consider the consequences of their deeds upon themselves and ponder over them. They should realise that as is the belief of the Muslim, the matter will not end here. Every single deed of ours is registered in the Book of Deeds. Every single person is at all times under the surveillance of the secret police of Allah - the Angels.

مَايَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيْبٌ عَتِيْدٌ

“Man does not utter a single word but there is near him an observer, ready.”(50.18)

Further the Quran states:

إِنَّ رُسُلَنَا يَكْتُبُوْنَ مَاتَمْكُرُوْنَ

“Verily our Messengers pen down that which they plot.”(10.21)

This is indeed a time for thought and reflection. The teaching of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was:

إِذَا سَبَّكَ رَجُلٌ بِمَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْكَ فَلَاتَسُبَّهُ بِمَاتَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ فَيَكُوْنُ أَجْرُ
ذٰلِكَ لَكَ وَوَبَالُهُ عَلَيْهِ

“When a man abuses you with a fault that he knows is within you, then do not abuse him (in return) for a fault which is in him. In this case the reward (of your restraint) will be for you and on him will be disaster.” (Jami)

It is a pity that among us, when we want to abuse or villify anyone, or to take revenge on him or to defame him, we do not even consider whether the evil we are throwing at him is really a fault in him. No, we just accuse, even falsely and fabricate lies against him, Is this the way we act upon the teachings of Islam?

If this is what we are doing, we are not actually taking revenge upon our opponents, but what we are actually doing is to disgrace the name of Islam. How are others to know that in doing what we are, we are actually acting contrary to Islam? How is a stranger, unacquainted with true Islam, to know what Islam really teaches? How is he to know how far we had strayed from Islam?

The stranger looks upon us as the picture, portraying Islam and so it should be. But do they know that we have cast aside its teachings and today we are not even prepared to

study its basics. So bad is the position that we cannot find time to learn our deen, its teachings, the words and deeds of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and the practices and examples of the Companions of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

Today our 'deen' has become the search for sustenance. Our 'religion' now is to accumulate wealth. The total sum of our aspirations is the acquisition of rank and status in the world. In order to acquire position and to uphold our so- called dignity, or for some desirable worldly gain, we do not care whether we attack someone's honour. For that we do not hesitate to utter lies or to take false oaths.

Actually it was always known that a Muslim was one who never spoke a lie. Speaking lies was just not part of the make-up of a Muslim. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasa 11am) said: "When a person speaks a lie, the angels of Mercy flee one mile away from the bad odour emanating from his mouth." (Mishkat) This is as if the bad smell from speaking lies spreads for such a long distance.

A man asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "Can a believer ever be unmanly and devoid of courage?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "Yes, he can be." The man asked: "Can he be stingy?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "Yes he can be." The man asked: "Can he be a liar?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "No, a Muslim can never be a liar.''
(Mishkat)
Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Save yourself from speaking lies, because lies are far removed from Imaan."
(Durr Manthoor)
Sayyidah Ayesha (Radiallahu anha) said: "There was nothing more hateful in the sight of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) than lies. Whenever the speaking of lies by anyone became known to him, he remained uncomfortable until such time that he became aware of the repentance of that person." (Durr Manthoor)

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says we once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "Who is the best amongst men?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "Every person of open heart and truthful tongue." We asked again: "We know what a truthful tongue is but what is meant by an "open heart?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "The open hearted one is he who is Allah-fearing, straight-walking, without iniquity, jealousy or malice." (Ibn Majah)

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "You will never find a believer to be a liar."
Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Through the evil of speaking lies a man becomes deprived of fasting during the day and the performing of Tahajjud prayers at night."

Fuzail bin Iyaz said: "A man is not adorned by anything as much as he is adorned by halaal earnings and the speaking of truth." (Durr Manthoor)

Sayyidina Uqbah bin ‘Aamir (Radiallahu anhu) said: “I asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): Which is the path towards salvation?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Keep your tongue under control, remain in your home, (not moving outside without cause) and cry over your sins.” (Durr Manthoor)

QUESTION 6

Question: We see that the dignity of the Ulema is purposely being destroyed and on every front we hear them being criticised and abused.

Reply: What you say is completely true.
But I ask you: In which period of history was it ever so that enmity was not shown towards the Ulema, and when they were not insulted? Is it riot true that Imam Abu Hanifa was imprisoned? Was Imam Malik not badly beaten? And what severe sufferings did not Imam Ahmed bin Hambal have to bear?
You may name any of the illustrious scholars of Islam and find that they were the victims of attacks by enemies. Few were the exceptions. Most correctly did Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) say: وَالْجَاهِلُوْنَ لِاَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ اَعْدَاءٌ
“The ignorant ones are enemies to the men of knowledge.” (Durr Manthoor)

So it is and in the future this will surely continue to increase. In fact, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) mentioned it as one of the signs of the coming of Qiyamat. In almost all those Ahaadeeth mentioning the signs of the nearness of Qiyamat you will find mention of this.

Signs of Qiyamat:
Most of those signs have already started to appear and as for those signs which have not yet appeared, there are already signs of their appearing very soon.

Hence there is nO reason why this enmity should not become more intense. But what we see today is still nothing in comparison to what is to be seen in the future.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Such a time will come when the Ulema will be killed like dogs. If only at the time the Ulema could become insane...”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Such a time will come when the death of the Ulema will be more sought after then red gold.”

In another Hadeeth it is said: “Such a time will dawn over men when the leadership of the Ulema will not be followed, nd neither will any respect be shown to men of wisdom, nor will elders be honoured, and no sympathy will be shown to the young ones. For the sake of acquiring any worldly gain, fighting and murder will take place. It will be such a time

when that which is permissible will not be considered as such and when that which is prohibited will not be looked upon as such. The saintly ones will wander around in fear and the men of that time will be the worst of the creation. And on the Day of Qiyamat Allah will not look towards such people with mercy at all."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Such a time will come when the true believers will roam about secretly just as today the munafiqs are roaming among you in secret manner." (Ishaa-at)

In another Hadeeth it is reported: "Even if a believer should one day take refuge in the hole inhabited by a lizard, Allah will send over him such a per- son who will cause him untold harassment and torment." (Majma-ul-Zawaid)

So we see that the showering of the Allah-fearing ones with insults and abuse, is an activity which will continuously be on the increase. As bad as that is in itself, it is still nothing in comparison to something else which we now see taking place.

We have spoken about insultshurled at the Allah-fearing ones. But how sad it is to see that these days even the SAHABAH (Radiallahu anhuma) — those illustrious companions of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) are not spared or even immune from theattacks and abuse of so-called enlightened ones. It is of course a fact that among the Shias, this despicable pass-time has always been a prominent type of activity. Now, however, this has become the work of so-called educated and enlightened Sunnis.

Hence whatever abuse and insults they can lay their hands on, is unashamedly cast at these glorious Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma). Every bit of nonsense which enters the mind, and which besmirches the character and integrity of these valiant sons of Islam, is unashamedly uttered.

And it seems that there is none to stop and prevent them, none to intervene!!!

These foolish ones who seemingly under the guise of historical objectivity do themselves and us a great disservice, should at least have pay attention to the grave warnings uttered by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who said:

"Whosoever abuses my Sahabah, on him shall be the curse of Allah and the angels and all mankind." (Jami)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) prayed and said: "0 Allah let me not be alive and (0 my companions) may you also not be alive at such a time when the AIim will not be followed, and when no respect will be shown to the wise. The people of that time will have hearts like infidels and their tongues will be as eloquently sweet like the tongues of the Arabs." (Targheeb)

It is reported in a Hadeeth: "Such a time will come when for him who holds fast onto his deen, it will be as difficult as holding burning coals of fire (in his bare hands)." (Ishaa-at)

In another Hadeeth wherein Rasulullah (Sallallahu -at)

Further signs are that there will be a general slump in markets, a great increase in the birth of illegitimate children, back-biting and tale-bearing will be widespread, the wealthy will be honoured and respected, the evil-doers will be in control and there will be an upsurge and abundance in building. (Ishaa-at)
Alayhi Wasallam) mentions the signs of the coming of the Day of Qiyamat, he also mentions this: "Among the members of the family, the one who is a true believer, will be more despised and unworthy than the kid of a goat."

He also predicted: "In family circles the immoral evil-doers will be considered the leaders, the wicked vulgar ones will take care of the affairs of the family and a man will be honoured and respected simply so that others may be saved from the evil that he may cause. (Ishaa-at)

The following is also a sign of the coming of Qiyamat: "Numerous will be the singing girls, the use of musical instruments will be widespread, much wine will be drunk and the predecessors of this Ummat will be insulted and abused."

Another Hadeeth paints the picture of the latter days thus: "A time will come when any Allah-fearing righteous man will not be able to keep his faith safe and intact unless he flees with it from one mountain to another or from one hole to another just as a fox flees about with his young ones. That will be the time when the acquisition of halaal earnings will be extremely difficult without sinning against Allah." (Ishaa
Other signs are that there will be vulgar speech and ill-treatment of neighbours. Sudden deaths will abound. This is a reference to the general occurance we have today with people passing away suddenly from heart attacks, heart failure or cardiac arrest.

In short, the signs of Qiyamat are many and numerous. The Ulema have compiled specil books on the topic. When most of these signs have already made their appearence, there is absolutely no reason why those not yet seen, should not appear in the near future. They will most certainly come to pass. The attacks will not only affect the Ulema. No, every religious Allah-fearing one will suffer this fate. To hold onto and act according to deen will be more difficult then holding burning coals in the hand. Another Hadeeth states that at that time the righteous and truthful ones will be belied and the words of liars will be believed.

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) says: Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "How will you be on that day when the young men will be immoral and when the women disobedient?"

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma) asked: "Will that really be the position?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "In truth that is how it will be and even worse." Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked:

"How will you be on that day when you will enjoin the doing of evil and prevent people from good work?"
The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhuma) asked: "Will it really be so?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "In truth that is how it will be and even worse." Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked:
"How will you be on that day when you will consider evil deeds as good and good deeds as evil?" (Majma-ul-Zawaa-id)

Degrading of the Ulema

There is something quite significant in the last two thoughts expressed here. It is one thing to perform a bad deed and completely and infinitely a worse thing to consider that bad deed to be a good thing. In the light of Shariat it is not as bad a thing to perform an evil deed as it is to consider that evil deed to be good.

This indicates corruption in one's belief and such corruption is always more severe than corruption of actions. A person may be tremendously bad sinner, but it still does not bring him to Kufr (disbelief). But if something small has been proven and accepted as one of the essentials of deen and a person denies it, jeers at it or make light of it, he is excluded from the pale of Islam and becomes a Kaaflr (disbeliever).

Almost all these signs are witnessed today. Now I ask you, if the Ulema of Islam and the men of knowledge are being denounced and abused, is it something to be wondered at?

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mas-ood (Radiallahu anhu) once told someone: "You people are now living in an age when many Ulema are around, and when there is a scarcity of those men proficient and skilled in the Quranic recitation. The instructions of the Quran-e-Kareem is very much noted but not so much attention is given to the letters thereof. 'This is a time when few are the beggars and numerous are the givers, when lengthy Salaahs are performed and short are the sermons and when men give priority and preference to deeds of righteousness over their desires and passions. But soon such an age will dawn when few will be the Ulema and numerous the proficient readers of the Quran, when more concern will be shown for the letters and words of the Quran than to its injunctions, when many will be the beggars and few the givers, when sermons will be lengthy and the Salaahs short, when men will give priority for their desires over de'ds of righteousness. (Jami)

Yes all these will come to pass and are in fact already happening. Then too it has always been the divine law from time immemorial that the saintly Shaikhs and Ulema have to be abused and attacked. Never in history has it been that this denunciation and abuse against the scholars of Islam did not take place. In the Hadeeth we have the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

إِنَّ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ لَا يَرْفَعَ شَيْئًا مِنْ أَمْرِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا وَضَعَهُ

"It is the general practice with Allah that whatever of this world he elevates in rank, he also lowers in rank." (Bukhari, Abu Dawood, Nisai, Ahmed, Jami)

For this reason if you ponder over the world and its history, and meditate on the various eras in histoty and if you consider our present times with a searching eye, you will see the truth hereof. You will see that when a man had once been noted as being of particular fame, you will later see him disgraced in the same type of activity. You will see people who had been praised and cheered in newspapers, posters and placards, being later insulted and denounced in those same newspapers, and posters. Those people who had ac quire great fame in private circles and in public gatherings, become denounced, abused and insulted in those very circles. You will find these change-overs in attitude may take a longer or a shorter period of time to come aliout in the cases of some, but I am almost sure that there is no exception to this rule.

And so I say that this (denunciation of the Ulema) is not really something to worry about much. It is not necessary for the Ulema to pay undue attention to it or to fight to eradicate it. But what is really required is this: They should definitely endeavour to clear up what is among themselves and keep pure and clean that which lies between them and Allah Ta'aala. Their relationship should be proper between themselves and Allah Ta'aala. They should under no circumstances lift a finger to perform any deed for the sake of honour and their own fame. Whatever they do should be for the pleasure of Allah Ta'aala, the protection of His deen and to let the truth and the word of Allah Ta'aala prevail above all other. If others come along in support, then Allah Ta'aala be praised. And if none come along, they should not become despondent.

Is it not true that at the hands of unworthy and undesirables the Ambiyaa (Alayhimus Salaam) suffered tremendous harassment? What insults and abuse they bore? They even were injured and suffered bodily harm. Is it not true that some of them were killed? Look at what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had to suffer? They called him a sorcerer, fortune-teller, a mad-man. They accused him of causing dissension among people. And what else! All those things were said of him and yet he tolerated it.

The Ulema are the heirs of the Ambiyaa (Alayhimus Salaam). If all that happened to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), why should the heirs of the Ambiyaa (Alayhimus Salaam) complain if some of this abuse comes their way?

What is to be noted, thought about and paid attention to is this: All these should be tolerated and borne with patience for Allah Ta'aala's pleasure alone. That should be the only aim, and for it, all should be tolerated. Let it not be such that this pleasure be not attained because that would be a great loss.
Ia fact, I sometimes think that for simple people like myself it is indeed a great favour from Allah Ta'aala that all these rich people and men of means remain aloof from us and resent and shun our type of society.

Hazrat Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Jaanan (Rahmatullah Alayh) wrote in one of his letters: "Praise to Allah that in these times the worldly people of this locality do not mix with the poor sufis otherwise these poor ones would land in great difficulties."

Khwaja Hashim (Rahinatullah Alayh) wrote in the 'Maqaumat' of Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani Sheilch Ahrned Sirhindi (Rahmatullah Alayh): "Once I visited Khwaja Husamuddin (Rahmatullah Alayh) who was one of the spiritual successors of Khwaja Baqi Billah (Rahmatullah Alayh). In the meeting one of those present complained about the attitude of the wealthy ones, who do not keep any contact with the dervishes. In fact they do not have any respect for the dervishes as was the case before. Hearing this, Khwaja Saheb (Rahmatullah Alayh) replied: "My dear brother! This is the wisdom of Allah! In bygone times the more the dervishes stayed aloof from others, the more the wealthy drew nearer to them. So independent were the saints. Nowadays we are not like that at all. If those wealthy noblemen should keep close relations with us, and increase their intimacy, we will not be able to maintain and preserve our ascetic lifestyle. Hence we should be grateful that Allah's grace is our preserver and protector." (Kalimaat-Tayyibaat)

It is certain that those who continuously look for bad things in the true Ulema, who take a special pride in showering abuse and insults at them, are doing themselves greater harm. There is no doubt about that. All that harm they can cause the Ulema is this, that they may suffer somewhat through material losses. And this too only if it had been predestined that by their doing some harm may be inflicted. Then also they can cause the Ulema some loss of respect, honour or dignity in the world - and this worldly respect and dignity are worthless and passing possessions. But as for the insulters and abusers, they are causing themselves tremendous religious harm.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "That man is not from among us, who does not respect our elders, neither show mercy on our young ones nor appreciate the AIim (scholar of deen amongst us)." (Targheeb)

Having heard this saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), let those who openly abuse the Ulema in general and who swear at them, count themselves as members of the Ummat of Sayyidina Muhammed (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). They can go on doing so. But the leader and chief of this Ummat himself is not prepared to accept them as such.
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "There are three persons whom none but munafiqs (hypocrites) can look upon as being insignificant and low. The first is the man who reaches a ripe old age in Islam, the second is the men of knowledge (an Alim) and the third is a just king." (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

أُغْدُ عَالِمًا أَوْ مُتَعَلِّمًا أَوْ مُسْتَمِعًا أَوْ مُحِبًّا وَلَاتَكُنِ الْخَامِسَ فَتَهْلِكَ

"Be an Aiim or a student or a listener to discourses of knowledge or one who loves the men of knowledge. And be not a fifth one for then you will meet with destruction.

Hazrat Abdul Barr (Radiallahu anhu) said: "The 'fifth' type of person referred to here are those who bear hatred and animosity against the Ulema." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi

Wasallam) is also reported to have said: “Be an Alim or a student. And if you are unable to do so, then love the Ulema and do not bear hatred and malice against them.” (Majma)

According to another Hadeeth:

حَمَلَةُ الْقُرْآنِ عُرَفَاءُ اَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ

“Those who carry within themselves the Quran will be the headmen of the inmates of Paradise on the Day of Qiyamat.”

Further it is also reported:

حَمَلَةُ الْقُرْاٰنِ اَوْلِيَاءُ اللهِ فَمَنْ عَادَاهُمْ عَادٰى اللهَ وَمَنْ وَّالَاهُمْ فَقَدْ وَالَى اللهَ

“Those who carry the Quran within themselves are the friends of Allah Ta ‘aala. Whosoever bears enmity against them has shown enmity to Allah Ta ‘aala. And whosoever befriends them befriends Allah Ta ‘aala.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said that he did not have as much fear for anything else on behalf of his Ummat as he has for three things. Among those he mentioned that they may see a man of knowledge and let him become lost to them and not pay any attention to him. (Targheeb)

In his book Sharh-Muhath-thab, Imam Nawawi quotes from Sahih Bukhari a Hadeeth wherein Allah Ta’aala says: “Against anyone who harasses any saint (friend) of mine, I declare war.”

Khateeb Baghdadi quotes Imani Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh) and Imam Abu Haneefa (Rahmatbilah Alayh) as saying: “If the Ulema of Islamic law are not the saintly friends of Allah Ta’aala, then no one will be.”

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) says: “Whosoever harrasses any Alim of Islamic law has caused trouble and pain to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). And the one who causes trouble to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has caused trouble to Allah Ta’aala.”

Hafiz Abu Qausim bin Asaakir (Rahmatullah Alayh) writes:

اِعْلَمْ يَااَخِىْ وَفَّقَنِىَ اللهُ وَاِيَّاكَ لِمَرْضَاتِهٖ وَجَعَلَنَا مِمَّنْ يَّخْشَاهُ وَيَتَّقِيْهِ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهٖ اَنَّ لُحُوْمَ الْعُلَمَاءِ مَسْمُوْمَةٌ وَعَادَةُ اللهِ فِىْ هَتْكِ اَسْتَارِ مُنْتَقِصِيْهِمْ مَعْلُوْمَةٌ وَاَنَّ مَنْ اَطْلَقَ اللِّسَانَ فِى الْعُلَمَاءِ بِالثَّلْبِ بَلَاهُ اللهُ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهٖ بِمَوْتِ الْقَلْبِ

“My dear brother, listen carefully! May Allah Ta ‘aala grant to you and to me the provisions to seek His pleasure and make us of those who frar Him and guard us against evil.

Note that the flesh of the Ulema is poisonous. (So is backbiting them). And the general law of Allah Ta ‘aala is to unmask those who attack the Ulema. This is quite well-known (He exposes the faults of those who attack the honour and dignity of the Ulema). For the

one who uses his tongue in attacking them, Allah will cause his heart to die even before his death. "(Shurh-Muhuth-thab)

Maulana Abdulhay (Rahmatullah Alayh) writes in his "fatawa": "If the object of him who abuses the Ulema is to humiliate them because of their knowledge, then the Ulema, of jurisprudence pass a verdict of Kufr against him. If however, he has any other object then too there is no doubt in that person being a faasiq, (evildoer) sinful person, worthy of Allah's anger and deserving of the punishment in this world and the hereafter."

Having written this Maulana Abduthay (Rahmatullah Alayh) in support of this statement quoted some Quranic texts, Ahaadeeth and writings from other Ulema.

Imam Abdul Wahhab Shahrani (Rahmatullah Alayh), one of the greats among the Sufis wrote a book on those covenants Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) took from his Ummat. In that book he writes:

أُخِذَ عَلَيْنَا الْعَهْدُ الْعَامُّ مِنْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَنْ نُكْرِمَ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَنُبَجِّلَهُمْ وَنُوَقِّرَهُمْ وَلَانَرٰى لَنَا قُدْرَةً عَلٰى مُكَافَاتِهِمْ وَلَوْ اَعْطَيْنَاهُمْ جَمِيْعَ مَا نَمْلِكُ اَوْخَدَمْنَاهُمْ الْعُمْرَ كُلَّهُ وَهٰذَا الْعَهْدُ قَدْ اَخَلَّ بِهِ غَالِبُ طَلَبَةِ الْعِلْمِ وَالْمُرِيْدِيْنَ فِىْ طَرِيْقِ الصُّوْفِيَةِ حَتّٰى لَانَكَادُ نَرٰى اَحَدًا مِّنْهُمْ يَقُوْمُ بِوَاجِبِ حَقِّ مُعَلِّمِهٖ وَهٰذَا دَاءٌ عَظِيْمٌ فِى الدِّيْنِ مُؤْذِنٌ بِاِسْتِهَانَةِ الْعِلْمِ وَبِاَمْرِ مَّنْ اَمَرَنَا بِاِجْلَالِ الْعُلَمَاءِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

"Rasulullah (Sallallahu Akiyhi Wasallam) made a covenant with us wherein be made i compulsory on us to treat the Ulema with respect and honour. We are not in the position ever to repay them for theirfavours upon us, not even If we grant to them all our possessions and serve them throughout our lives. 'Jany students and mureeds fail to live up to the demands of this covenant, so much so that not one person is found who discharges the stipulated injunctions towards his master (Ustad). This is indeed a great disease eating at our deen, which is indicative of our insult towards knowledge. And it is indicative of our indifference toward the commands of that person (Rasulullah) (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who commanded this."
In this same book the writer says:

أُخِذَ عَلَيْنَا الْعَهْدُ الْعَامُّ مِنْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَنْ نُبَجِّلَ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَالصَّالِحِيْنَ وَالْاَكَابِرَ وَلَوْ لَمْ يَعْمَلُوْا بِعِلْمِهِمْ وَنَقُوْمُ بِوَاجِبِ حُقُوْقِهِمْ وَنَكِلَ اَمْرَهُمْ اِلَى اللهِ فَمَنْ اَخَلَّ بِوَاجِبِ حُقُوْقِهِمْ مِنَ الْاِكْرَامِ وَالتَّبْجِيْلِ فَقَدْ خَانَ اللهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَاِنَّ الْعُلَمَاءَ نُوَّابُ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَحَمَلَةُ شَرْعِهٖ وَخُدَّامِهٖ فَمَنْ اسْتَهَانَ بِهِمْ تَعَدّٰى ذٰلِكَ اِلٰى رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَذٰلِكَ كُفْرٌ وَّتَاَمَّلْ مَنِ اسْتَهَانَ بِغُلَامِ السُّلْطَانِ اِذَا اَرْسَلَهٗ اِلَيْهِ كَيْفَ يَسْمَعُ السُّلْطَانُ مِنْ رَسُوْلِهٖ فِيْهِ وَيَسْلُبُ نِعْمَةَ ذٰلِكَ الَّذِى اسْتَهَانَ وَيَطْرُدُهٗ عَنْ حَضْرَتِهٖ بِخِلَافِ مَنْ بَجَّلَهٗ وَعَظَّمَهٗ وَقَامَ بِوَاجِبِ حَقِّهٖ يُقَرِّبُهُ السُّلْطَانُ

‘A covenant has been made with us on behalf of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) that we respect the Ulema, the saintly elders and the elders, whether they themselves act according to their knowledge or not. And that we shall continue to discharge their necessary rights and entrust their personal matter to Allah Ta ‘aala. Whosoever fails to discharge their indispensible rights and fails to show them the necessary respect and honour, is indeed guilty of sin towards Allah Ta ‘aala and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), for the Ulema are the successors and heirs of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), the bearers of the Shariat and they are His servants. When anyone insults them, the insults set forth a chain reaction which iaches Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). This is Kufr. Now think for yourself. The king appoints someone as his ambassador. The king will with attention listen to this ambassador and debar the insulter from his court, On the other hand, the king will make a favourite out of that man who showed respect and honour to his ambassador and who discharged the rights due to an emissary.”

In this quotation there is also mention of the fact - “whether he acts according to his knowledge or not.” This has already been discussed in detail in the early part of this letter where we dealt with the statements made by Sayyidina Ma’az (Radiallahu anhu). There is no need for repetition at this stage.

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) says that Rasulullah (Sailallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “When my Ummat shall begin to harbour hatred for the Ulema, and when they shall begin to erect tall buildings towering out over other buildings, and when they shall contract marriages in search of riches and wealth (instead of religiousness and piety), Allah Ta’aala will set over them four kinds of punishment: famine, oppression by kings and rulers, dishonesty by the ruling officers, and continuous attacks by the enemies.” (Haakim)

Ask yourself: which of these torments are not with us today? But when of their own free will people choose the path which brings these evils, then why complain?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said that in a certain house of Barn Israel there was a bitch which was about to give birth to puppies. A guest arrived at the house. The bitch decided that she would not bark at the guest that night. However from inside the womb of the bitch the puppies began to bark. Then Allah Ta’aala revealed: “This is the example of that Ummat which will come after you. The foolish ones of that Ummat will overcome and subdue its Ulema.” (Mujma-ul-Zawaa-id)

Rejection of the Ulema

In the books of Fiqah and Fatwa it has been written that hatred, dislike and resentment against the Ulema and against knowledge is a very dangerous thing. Thus in the Fatawa-Alamghir it is written:

مَنْ اَبْغَضَ عَالِمًا مِّنْ غَيْرِ سَبَبٍ ظَاهِرٍ خِيْفَ عَلَيْهِ الْكُفْرُ

“There is fear of Kufr against that person who harbours hatred against any AIim without any acceptable clear reason.”

The term “without any acceptable clear reason” indicates that in the event of there being a reason acceptable in Shariat, and for which there is sanction from Shariat, there is no fear of Kufr. But without any such reason, it is extremely dangerous for one’s faith. When there is the possibility of such an extremely dangerous situation arising, is it not best that everyone take special precautions and be careful?

It is true that others have the right of rejecting the findings of an AIim. His word can be rebutted. But that can only be done if from the Shariat and from the Quranic or Hadeeth texts there is proof; and only on condition that the rejector has the capability of putting up a proper argument on the basis of those texts.

What I am saying here is not that whatever any Aiim says is of necessity correct, and that no one should ever question reject or argue against his findings. Except for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasailam) no other person is such that his word cannot be rejected and in whose word and deed there is not the possibility of error. There certainly is the possibility of error in all men except Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and it has been shown to be such. But in the pointing out of mistakes and rejection of findings the Shariat has laid down specific regulations. There are grades, rules and regulations. Until such time that one is acquainted with these, one has no right of rebutting and rejecting, what the Ulema say.

I am also not trying to say that the Ulema are faultless, infallible and without shortcomings. They certainly have faults and shortcoming especially with regard to the needs of the times. But while we are looking for their faults there are also some other things worthy of consideration.

These are things which those two Alinis (Moulana Thanwi and Maulana Madam) can deal with in better fashion. But because in this topic under discussion, the Ulema themselves are being placed under the search-light, it becomes extremely difficult to deal with these relating matters. And because their own rank and dignity is involved they wont defend themselves through explanations and through the rejection of the complaints of objectors.

Now I would like to draw your attention to some points before I proceed. The point that I wish to make firstly is that the relationship between myself and yourself is such that it excludes the possibility of suspicion that I want you to respect and revere me. Secondly; I am not very much couaited among the cmi nent Ulema. I am merely a book-seller, selling religious literature to pass the days of my life. Thirdly, this is a personal letter from me to you and fourthly:
The respect and honour shown to me by you and all my friends is much more than I really deserve.
Hence listen carefully! Here are a few noteworthy points over which to ponder. Very oftea mistakes are made in this respect and sometimes purposely they are put out of sight. Occasionally they are being forgotten or left aside through ignorance. In any case I will mention them:

Point No. 1:
Is it so that everyone who is dressed in the garb of the Ulema, who had at some time been registered at some Arabic seminary, who can deliver an interesting lecture or who writes well, is an Alim? Is everyone with the above description a member of the Ulema fraternity? Think! Is it not a tremendous injustice to take the statement of everyone who looks like an Aiim and attribute it to the Ulema?

Is it not a fact that in all worldly things there is the genuine and the artificial, the original and the imitation, the real and the fake? Look at the most precious worldly things - gold, silver and jewellery. Do we not find it there too? Now look at the profession, the help of which is required by all of us is that of the medical man. Is it not a fact that in both these - precious metals and doctors, there are often more fake than genuine? Do we not find that the artificial and counterfeit outnumber the real?

Now I ask you. Is it also so that the doctors and physicians are being abused and denounced because there are in their ranks more quacks dangerous to life
than proper physicians? Is it also so that all gold, silver and jewellery are being thrown away just because there are more artificial stones than genuine? No, never! You will find that in the event of any known and famous physician not being available, people will go for help even to those untrained quacks in cases of emergency. Why? Because of the necessity, and because of the difficulty of reaching a skilled physician.

Similarly, you will find in cases of necessity people will purposely purchase artificial gold. That is because they are in need of gold or because the availability of gold is not easy and even if it is available, the cost is prohibitive. But when it comes to the Ulema, all and sundry become the victims of abuse just because there are so many imposters dressed in their garb. Can you understand the difference? Why this difference in attitude? Is it because the former are being considered as necessary items and the latter (the Ulema) not so? The former are considered indispensable and the latter (the Ulema) are looked upon as useless. People will search for the best doctor and if not available any second-rate doctor will be considered a blessing. Then with all obedience they will act upon his instructions and value his opinions and diagnosis.

As for the Ulema, if the genuine Ulema are not available, than those who are found are considered nt to be accomplished performers in our sight with the result that all are looked upon as being useless. However, if these people should ponder, if a religious need is looked upon as being a religious necessity, if there is feeling and concern for the deen in the heart, if there is at least so much concern as is felt at the time of the illness of some beloved family member or if there is at least so much interest as is felt for the marriage of a daughter, they would search for a proper Aiim as much as they would search for a properly qualified and skilled physician. That is if there is really “worry” and concern in the heart for deen.

The end result of the illness of a beloved relative can be death. To this the best doctor and the most skillful specialist can do nothing. He is helpless in preventing his own death. How can he do anything for anyone else in this case if death has been predestined?

Similarly if no jewellery could be found for the marriage of a daughter, then what is wrong? The worst that will happen is that members of the clan or near relatives may taunt and tease. Or they may have some unpleasant things to ny. But the wedding will continue.

Ac for the Ulema, they are needed for the deen itself, without which life is Worthless, and without which our coming into this world is useless. Man has been created solely for the sake of carrying out the stipulation of deen. The Holy Quran states:

وَمَاخَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

"I have not created men and jinn (for any other reason) except that they ihould worship me." (51.56)

When this is the sole object for man's creation, then everything which is required for the realizition of this object is of the utmost importance.

The need for the Ulema

Rasulullah (Saliallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The example of the Ulema on earth is like the stars of the heavens, whereby a person finds the way in the darkness of the jungles and at sea. When the stars become devoid of light, the possibility is strong indeed that the leaders of the nation go astray." (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallailahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "The nearest to the rank of prophethood is the party of Ulema and then the Mujahideen, the warriors in Allah's path. The Ulema show the path leading towards that which the Messengers of Allah brought and taught and the Mujahideen with their swords (and weapons) call the attention of others towards that path." (Ihya)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: "Upon him who teaches righteous things Allah sends His merciful grace, for his welfare the angels pray, and so does everything that lies in the heavens and on earth and even the ants in their holes and the fish in the sea." (Tirmidhi)

Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) is reported to have said: "When an Aiim passes away such a vacuum is created which can only be filled by a successor or substitute of his." (Ihya)

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "The death of one thousand devoted worshippers of Allah who continued in prayer throughout the night and fasted during the day is lighter upon the Ummat than the death of one Alim who is acquainted with what is lawful and unlawful in Shariat." (Ihya)

Point No. 2:

The second point to which I wish to draw your attention and which I want you to consider is this: In every field of work you will find consultation with the experts of that field. When a house has to be erected, a mason has to be employed. When a lock has to repaired you cannot escape from the services of a locksmith. A person may be very

clever, shrewd, capable and intelligent, but when he has to file a legal suit in a court of law he cannot avoid employing a lawyer or an advocate. No matter how capable you are, the work of erecting a house will be done by a mason.

But is the knowledge of the deen looked upon as being so cheap that everyone who knows a little about writing and public speaking immediately becomes an expert in the hidden intricacies of Shariat, the expert research scholar and master of the nation? How is it that when such a person gives his research findings even the Holy Quran and the Hadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) are not acceptable? How is it that in such cases even the verdicts of the Ulema are rejected?

When any protest or objections are made against the utterings of these "enlightened scholars," it comes from the side of the Ulema. So the spitting of venom against the Ulema and the making of false or untrue allegations against them by these "scholars" in order to steer public feeling away from the Ulema is quite conceivable. That is because it is only these Ulema who can expose their wrong interpretations and distortions of the truth. They will oppose the Ulema, become their ememies and whatever possible they can do against them, they will do. But what can be done? About these people Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "On your behalf I fear most, those hypocrites who are experts in the use of language." (Targheeb)

Those are the people who with their accomplished speeches and fine writings make people their admirers and mislead them, while at the same time sneer and poke fun at every part of the deen. They are considered experts on all parts of the deen.

During the Caliphate of Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu), he classified the experts of every part of the deen. Thus once in delivering a sermon at Jabia he announced: "Whosoever wished to find out anything about the Holy Book of Allah Ta'aala, let him approach Ubay bin Ka'ab (Radiallahu anhu). And whosoever wishes to find an answer to any query regarding inheritance, let him approach Zayd bin Thaabit (Radiallahu anhu). And whosoever wishes to know anything about the laws of jurisprudence (fiqah) let him approach Ma'az bin Jabal (Radiallahu anhu). And whosoever wishes to demand some money from the Baitul Maal (the public treasury), let him come to me for Allah has made me the ruler and the distributor of wealth." (Maj ma-uiZawaaid)

The Neo-Ulema and PSuedo-Ulema

During the era of the Tabieen (successors to the Sahabah) it was the general practice to set up special groups of experts on the various parts of Deen. In this manner there was a special committee of experts on Hadeeth, Fiqah, Tafseer of the Quran, a special group of sufis, and a special group of preachers and lectureres. But today in our times every man who knows a bit of Arabic, wants to portray himself as a master of all the branches of Islamic learning in the highest degree. Even if he knows merely how to write Urdu fluently or can make an eloquent speech, he is considered to have mastered the highest degree of learning in Sufism, as well as being a competent legal expert in Islamic Fiqah, as well as giving himself the right to interpret the Quran according to his own whims and

fancies with all new and unheard of opinions. He does not care whether his opinions had ever been corroborated by any of our saintly, rightly-guided ancestors or not.

It does not matter to him at all whether his views and interpretations are rejected by the Ahaadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) or not. Such people interpret the deen only according to their own whims and desires and they have no hesitation in mentioning whatever comes into their heads. So over-confident are they about the correctness of their views that none dare prove them wrong or to point out their deviation from the path.

When anyone protests that this interpretation is contrary to what the predecessors and ancestors taught, he is considered one-track-minded, bound in a strait-jacket, narrow-minded, a man without any thinking ability or without any "research." But if anyone should say that all that was said by the predecessors of Islam were all wrong, and should come forth with funny new interpretations, such a person will be looked upon and lauded as a great research scholar.

Listen to what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: " Whosoever in interpreting the Quran says therein anything of his own opinion commits a mistake even if he is correct." (Majma-ul-Zawaa-id)

That is what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) says. But these people in their explanation of every verse of the Quran cast aside all that was said by our rightly-guided Islamic ancestors, and come forth with outrageous new explanations.

And now to add insult to injury, these people - all of them - give advice to the Ulema not to create division and dissension in the Ummat! They advise the Ulema to refrain from passing fatwas against anyone of being an evil-doer or a Kaafir. But you hardly fmd anyone to admonish these "enlightened souls" to refrain from exceeding the limits, from rejecting the concept of Nabuwwat (Prophethood), from rejecting the Quran and Ahaadeeth. No one dare tell them not to reject Salaah and Fasting as nonsensical entities. No one tells them to stop insulting the holy person of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) and to tell the world that the Imams (Mujtahideen) were gone astray, leading others astray!

What is this? These people openly state that Islamic law is unacceptable and impracticable, deny every branch of Islam, poke fun at and laugh at everything religious - everything holy to the Muslim - and still they remain Muslims! And deeply religious!? Just think again! The Ulema speak out and become accused of sowing dissension and division among the Ummat!

When an Alim raises a voice against him, such is called an enemy of the deen, an ill-wisher of the Muslims and one only too eager towards "Kufrization" —to brand anyone as a Kaafir.

The Fatwa of Kufr.

If only they use their thinking faculties they will have to admit that the Ulema do not "make others into kaafirs by their fatwas." All they do is to indicate who is a kaafir. This is so because if and when anyone rejects any of the essentials of the deen, then through his own actions and free will and his own "enlightenment" or ignorance, he becomes a kaafir. This is so whether anyone calls him a kaafir or not. If however, he has not up to now been a kaafir, he does not become one by someone calling him a kaafir. And if he has already become a kaafir (through his actions or statements or belief), then by no one calling him a kaafir he still does not remain a Muslim.

If any thought is given to this matter it will be found that he who indicates that anyone is a kaafir, is actually doing that person a favour by making him aware of the fact that such-and-such a thing takes one out of the pale of Islam, and puts him into kufr. If anyone truly is concerned about his deen, he should take note and become careful of his actions. When there is not enough confidence in the verdict of that Alim, one should then make inquiries from other authorities to ascertain whether the word of the former is correct or not. It is quite possible that the fatwa may be wrong. I also do not deny the fact that it may be wrong. But it is definitely not the case that it is always wrong.

In this respect there are some of those enlightened souls who hold the view that anyone under the influence of his western education or through ignorance of deen may say or do anything (contrary to faith) and that he should never be called a kaafir. This, I say, is wrong. This is not an act that is in the interest of the Ummat and will lead to other unacquainted ones becoming involved in acts of kufr. Hence those who do not like it that blasphemous views should be announced as kufr, do not want that warning to be given to people so that they may change their ways.

People nowadays scoff at the Ulema with statements like this that today kufr has become cheap and that everyone has entered into it. By so saying they try to divert the public from paying any attention to such verdicts being passed against anyone. Now for anyone not to react vehemently against blasphemy is in itelf an indication of lack of interest in the deen, lack of faith in the sayings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and the jurists of this Ummat.

It is true indeed that the uttering of blasphemous words have become very easy these days. People do not even know what constitutes blasphemy and thus continue to utter such words. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself said that the uttering of words of kufr will become cheap and widespread.

He said: "Hasten towards the doing of good lest that time come along when such mischief will occur which will be like the darkest portions of the night (wherein the distinction between truth and falsehood will become difficult). At that time a man will rise in the morning as a Muslim and be a kaafir in the evening and he will be a Muslim in the evening and a kaafir in the morning. And a man will sell his deen for simple worldly gain." (Muslim, Mishkat)

In another Hadeeth it is stated: “A time of such mischief will come when from all sides the escort to hell will invite by calling towards hell.” (Mishkat)

According to another Hadeeth: “Very soon a time of such mischief will come when in the morning a person will be a believer and in the evening he will be a kaafir, except for that person whom Allah Ta’aala will save on account of knowledge.” (Daramy)

In this Hadeeth the phrase appears: “on account of knowledge.” This can only mean one thing; viz, that the person be acquainted with the limits of kufr and Imaan (faith). It means that he knows what those requirements are which makes a person a Muslim and what makes him a kaafir.

In still another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Near the Day of Qiyaxnat such severe mischief will appear just like the dark portions of the night, when a man will rise in the morning as a Muslim and will be a kaafir in the evening. In that time the one who remains seated will be better off than the one who stands up and the one who stands will be better off than he who walks. At that time rather be the doormat of your house.” (Mishkat, Abu Dawood)
In other words “keep laying in your house like the doormat of the house.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “A time of such dark mischief will appear from which no single man of the Ummat will escape. When it will seem as if it has ended, another branch of evil will appear. In the morning a man will be a Muslim and by night he will be a kaafir. (And others will in the evening be Muslims and in the morning kaafirs). Such will it be that two groups will arise. The one will be comprised of pure Muslims among whom there will not be a spot of hypocrisy. The other will be comprised of hypocrites among whom there will not be a spot of Imaan. The Dajjaal will appear at that time.” (Mishkat, Abu Dawood)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) further said: “I now see hosts and hosts of people entering into the fold of Islam. Soon such a time will come when hosts and hosts of people will leave the fold of Islam.” (Durr Manthoor, Haakim, Daramy, Majma)

So we see that this “cheapness” and its appearance on such a widespread scale is not the creation of the Molvis, (as some would have us believe). It has been clearly predicted by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) -the bringer of the Shariat - himself in no uncertain terms. This being the case, is it not then of the utmost importance that with regard to our deen, great care be taken? It serves no purpose whatsoever to say that “this group calls that group kaafir and that group calls this group kaafir. And as such no one’s calling another a kaafir is of any sequence.”

This does not remove any responsibility from our shoulders. In fact if one thinks carefully, one will find that the responsibility becomes increased. This is so because now one has to investigate those reasons wherefor the one calls the other a kaafir and in the light of knowledge of deen fmd out whether really a person becomes a kaafir because of

those reasons. If it is then found to be really so, one is obliged to save oneself and others from this calamity. One does not become relieved of any responsibility by merely passing some jocular remark that today kufr has become very cheap. This .Jcind of attitude does not achieve for us anything.

The Importance of the Sunnah of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam

How does one's deen remain intact after denying or sneering at or poking fun at any matter about which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had given a clear, categorical, unambiguous decision? This has been answered by the Quran itself in not one but on numerous occasions. The Quran states in one place:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَايُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَتّٰى يُحَكِّمُوْكَ فِيْمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ
لَايَجِدُوْا فِيْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا

"Nay, by your Lord, they do not believe until they make you (0 Muhammed and in your absence your Shariat) the judge of that which is in dispute between them, and then they do not find within themselves dislike for that which you decide and submit with fish submission." (IV v 65)

In as many Hadeeth we get the words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "None of you is a believer until such time that the desires of his heart is not subjected to that (Shariah) which I brought."

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوْبَكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ قُلْ أَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ
اللّٰهَ لَايُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِيْنَ

*Allah Ta 'aala says: "Say (0 Muhammed Sallallahu Aksyhi Wasahlam) f you love Allah Ta 'aala, then follow my commands (for I have been sent especially for this purpose). Verily Allah Ta 'aala is the Forgiver, the Mercfid. Say: Obey Allah Ta 'aala and the Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). But if they turn away, then know that Allah Ta 'aata does not love the unbelievers." (*III v 31,32)

عَنْ أَبِيْ رَافِعٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَاأُلْفِيَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ
مُتَّكِئًا عَلٰى أَرِيْكَتِهِ يَأْتِيْهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ أَمْرِيْ مِمَّا أَمَرْتُ بِهِ أَوْ نَهَيْتُ عَنْهُ
فَيَقُوْلُ لَاأَدْرِيْ مَاوَجَدْنَا فِيْ كِتَابِ اللّٰهِ اتَّبَعْنَاهُ

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Let not anyone of you be found sitting on his sofa1 reclining on cushions, who, when one of my commands will be brought to him of what I commanded or prohibited, and will say: 'We do not know (about that). We shall only follow that which we found in the Book of Allah Ta 'aala. (Ahmed, Abu Dawood)

This same contents has been mentioned in many Hadeeth, all of which refute the opinion and view of those people who say that it is sufficient to follow the Holy Quran alone.

Another Hadeeth says: 'I have been presented with the Holy Quran as well as other commandments like it. Soon such a time will dawn when a man fully filled (with food and drink) reclining on his sofa, will say: 'To act upon the book of Allah Ta'aala suffices.

Hold onto it. Whatever has been made lawful therein, consider to be lawful and whatever has been made unlawful therein, consider unlawful. In truth, that made unlawful by the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is as unlawful as that declared unlawful by Allah.' (Mishkat)

In these Hadeeth there is mention made of men filled (with food and drink) and reclining on thçir comfortable sofas. This is an indication of wealth and such foolish sayings come only from such wealthy persons. It is strange that when a person possesses some wealth, he feels he is in a position to put forth suggestions to improve the deen. Those who are poor do not find such thoughts crossing their minds. With the poor the fear of Allah Ta'aala is real.

Someone asked Sayyidina Ibn Umar (Radiallahu anhu): "In the Quran there are commands about Salaah to be performed while in residence at home and about Salaah during times of fear. But there is no mention of Salaah to be performed on a journey. How is that?"

He replied: "0 my nephew! Allah Ta'aala verily sent Muhammed (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) to us as his Messenger. We did not know anything. Hence we perform only that which we saw him doing." (Shifa)

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "People will argue with you about the verses of the Quran. Answer them with Hadeeth because those who are in possession of knowledge of Hadeeth are more acquainted with (the meaning of) the Book of Allah Ta'aala."
(Shifa)
One of the most well-known Tabi'ees and one of the greats among the Ulema, Imam Zuhri (Rahmatullah Alayh) said: "I have heard the Ulema before (the Sahabah Radiallahu anhum) saying: "In holding onto the Sunnah scrupulously is salvation. Knowledge is to disappear soon. The continued existence of the deen and the world depends upon the power of knowledge and their destruction lies in the loss of knowledge."

Another Tabiee Abdullah Daylami says: "From the saintly elders the saying has reached me that the disappearance of deen from the world commences with the omission of the Sunnat. One by one the Sunnats will be discarded just like the coils of rope is removed one by one." (Daramy)

Sayyidina Saeed bin Jubayr (Radiallahu anhu) once quoted a certain Hadeeth. One of those listening to him pointed out that the Hadeeth contradicted a certain Quranic verse. Saeed (Radiallahu anhu) said to him: "I relate to you a saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and you oppose it with a Quranic verse! You should remember that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had the best of knowledge of the meaning of the Quran." (Darmy)

What is meant here is this: Very often the Quranic verses tends to be concise and the Hadeeth is the explanation thereof. Hence one should not hasten to pass verdicts of the Hadeeth being a contradiction of certain Quranic verses. Thought and reflection is

required. And if, even after thought there still seems to be some form of contradiction, one should investigate whether that verse is abrogated or not. We agree that Hadeeth is not of the same rank as the verses of the Quran. But this is only because of there being less heavier proof of its really having been authentically proven to have been said by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) (according to the rules of reporting and transmitting). Apart from that, disobedience to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is as important as is disobedience to Allah Ta'aala.

Allah says in the Holy Quran:

وَمَنْ يَّعْصِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَهٗ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيْهَا
وَلَهٗ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ

"And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses the limits set by Him, He will cause to enter into afire abiding therein forever and for him shall be a shamefisl punishment." (4.14)

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَعَصَوُا الرَّسُوْلَ لَوْ تُسَوّٰى بِهِمُ
الْاَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُوْنَ اللّٰهَ حَدِيْثًا

"On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed Allah and the Messenger will wish that they were level with the earth (that they may be saved from disgrace). But they will not be able to hide anything from Allah." (IVv14)

وَمَا اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ

"And we have not sent any Messenger except that they be obeyed with Allah s permission." (4. 64)
In another place the Quran states:

وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ الرَّسُوْلَ فَقَدْ اَطَاعَ اللّٰهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلّٰى فَمَا اَرْسَلْنٰكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا

"And whosoever obeys the Messenger obeys Allah. And whosoever turns away (will suffer its consequences. So be not grieved) We have not sent you (0 Muhammed) as a warder over them (as your work is only to explain). (4. 80)

Steadfastness of the Sahabah (Radlallahu anhum)

Apart from these there are many other verses from which we come to know that true religion is in actual fact the conforming to the practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). This is the deen. This is the Shariat and acting according to it is obedience to Allah. This is the reason why it was so hard for the noble Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum), especially in the period of the four early Caliphs, to sway even a little from this following of the Sunnah.

Thus we saw that during the early days of the Caliphate of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), a trying time came over Islam as from all sides people turned their backs on Islam. That was the time of apostasy. So delicate was the situation that even a valiant, devoted man like Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) came and advised Hazrat Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) to act with a bit of leniency.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) rose in anger as he exclaimed:

أَجَبَّارٌ فِى الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَخَوَّارٌ فِى الْإِسْلَامِ

"0 Umar, how is it that in the days of ignorance prior to Islam, you were fanatically brave and now a coward in Islam!?

This was a way of taunting Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) whose bravery was almost proverbial. And now he came forward with such cowardly advice! Thereafter he exclaimed further (in reference to those who refused to give the Zakaat): "I swear by Allah! I shall wage war against anyone for refusing to give even a goatling as Zakaat which he used to give to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

According to other versions of this Hadeeth he exclaimed that he was prepared to fight against those who refused to give as Zakaat a mere piece of rope which he used to give previously. This was steadfastness on deen. This was preservation of deen and its protection. Of such a dangerous time in history when apostasy was rife, it would have been possible to give in slightly in the case of one of the obligatory duties. But for these people the mere thought of excluding one single act of those wherein they were required to follow the Rasul of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), meant giving yourself up for destruction and loss. This they would never do willingly or knowingly.

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) said: "I see that you people have made Mosques of your houses. If now you commence performing your Salaah in your houses and leave the Mosques, you will leave aside the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). And when you leave aside the Sunnah, you will become kaafir." (Abu Dawood)

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "The Salaah of the traveller consists of the two rak'ahs. Whosoever acts contrary to the Sunnah is a kaafir." (Shifa)

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Whosoever does not perform Salaah is a kaafir."

Sayyidina Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) also said the same of him who gives up Salaah. And so also says Sayyidina Ja'bir (Radiallahu anhu), as well as many other Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum), and Tabi'een. They issue a verdict of kufr against the man who deliberately discards Salaah.

However in view of the fact that 'other Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) disagree with the above views, the Ulema have been more careful and have narrowed the scope of excommunication. They say that should a person discard Salaah while denying its being compulsory, then he becomes a kaafir, otherwise not. It is actually Allah's mercy that there was some difference of opinion among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). If not, and if the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) had reached consensus on this issue, you can well imagine that it would have been compulsory to consider so many as kaafirs today, for we know how many are the ones who knowingly, willingly and deliberately discard Salaah.

Today with lots of pride we hear people say: “We do not dub any such one as kaafir, who professes the Kalima. That is, only the work of the Molvis, who brand the whole world as kaafir.”

But look, here Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) waged war against those who, although professing the Kalimah, refused to come forward with another pillar of the Shariat viz. Zakaat.

Sayyidina Daylami Himyari (Radiallahu anhu) says: “I told Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): “We are inhabitants of a cold country and have to do hard manual labour. Hence we make a wine from wheat so that (by drinking it) we may find strength for the hard work as well as protection against cold.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Is this wine intoxicating?”
I replied: “Yes it is definitely intoxicating.”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Abstain from it.”
I said: “The people will not abstain from it. They are addicted to it.”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “If they do not abstain from it, then fight with them.” (Abu Dawood)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once talking about trustworthiness said: “It will gradually decrease to such an extent that it will one day be remarked that among such-and-such a people there is one man who may be trusted. The way in which a person will be praised will be said of him: He is a shrewd person, very clever and amiable in manner, or that he is brave indeed! But in him there will not be faith to equal a mustard seed.” (Mishkat)

On another occasion while discussing the time of great mischief Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Then there will be men who will call towards falsehood.” (Mishkat)

Once an argument took place between two persons. The case reached Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who decided the case in favour of one of them. The one against whom was decided pleaded for pennission to have the case heard by Umar (Radiallahu anhu). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) agreed to this. The case was brought before Umar (Radiallahu anhu). After having heard the full case he went into his house, came forth with a sword and immediately struck down the person who brought the case to him and killed him. Then Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: “As for him who does not abide by the decision of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) this is the decision by me.”

Consider what our reaction is to the decision of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) today? How much do we not try to use our skills and schemes to circumvent his decisions and sayings? How often do we not find fun being made of his Sunnah? How much do we not see his greatly emphasised commands being wilfully opposed? If it was only one, then it is still not so bad. We do not only refer to things like: the beard, istinja, etc. What

about alcohol, interest on money - usury. Look what we think of Salaah, Fasting, Zakaat, Haj. See what we think of these and how we treat them. Remember this also: The man killed by Umar (Radiallahu anhu) professed the Kalimah,and was one of the people of the Qibla! And today, they want us to remain quiet against anyone just because he recites the Kalimah!

In other words when someone turns his face to the Qibla he is allowed to say whatever he likes! Never!

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ اَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوْهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَالْمَلٰئِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيّٖنَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ ذَوِى الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتَامٰى وَالْمَسَاكِيْنَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيْلِ وَالسَّائِلِيْنَ وَفِى الرِّقَابِ وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَآتَى الزَّكٰوةَ وَالْمُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ اِذَا عَاهَدُوْا وَالصَّابِرِيْنَ فِى الْبَاْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِيْنَ الْبَاْسِ اُوْلٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا وَاُوْلٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east and the west, but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the last day, and the Angels and the Scripture and the Prophets and gives wealth for His love's sake, to the next of kin, and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and for setting free of slaves.
And observes Salaah and gives Zakaat;
And (righteous) is he who keep their agreements when they make them, and (he who is) patient in tribulation and adversity and at the times of stress. These are the ones who are sincere and those are the ones who are Allah- fearing." (2.177)

It has also been reported that Iniam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh) said:

لَانُكَفِّرُ اَحَدًا مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ

"We do not call any of the Ahlil-Qiblah a kaafir.

Who the Ahill-Qibla Is

Is the meaning of the Imam's statement that whosoever lives in the neighbourhood of the Qiblah should not be called a kaafir even if he is a polytheist or unbeliever? Allah forbid! Or is it perhaps so that the statement implies that if anyone turns his face towards the Qiblah and utters all manner of blasphemy, a verdict of kufr should not be passed against him? Or that if anyone turns in prayer to the Qiblah or believes that the House of Allah is the Qiblah, he may utter whatever blasphemy he likes, worship idols or speak words of kufr, and that in such cases none may call him kaafir.

If such was the meaning of Imam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh), then I ask you, why do you think he addressed Jahm - leader of the Jahmiya sect:

اُخْرُجْ عَنِّىْ يَاكَافِرُ

"Depart from me, o you kaafir?" (Ikfarul Muihideen).

This Juhm was a heretic — an innovator of new ideas into the deen and the founder of a new sect.

Imam Abu Yusuf (Rahmatullah Alayh) says: “For about six months I debated with Imana A’Tham (Rahmatullah Alayh). And in the end we both agreed that whosoever maintains that the Quran is created, is a kaafir.” (Ikhar). Now I ask you, were those who considered the Quran to be created not of those who faced the Qiblah? Did they not perform Salaah and Fast? Did they not recite the Kalimah?

Then there is that sect among the Shias who oelieve that Jibreel (Alayhis Salaam) made a mistake, and instead of bringing revelation to Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) he erroneously brought it to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). These are unanimously considered as kaafir. I ask you: Were they not of those who recited the Kalimah and did they not call themselves Muslims who performed their Salaah facing the Qiblah?

Then there are the Quramitah sect who denied that ghusl is required after sexual intercourse, considered wine to be permissible and held that only two days fasts were obligatory in the whole year. They even in their azaan call to prayer exclaimed that Muhammed bin Hanafiyah was the messenger of Allah. Was there ever any doubt about their being kaafir -outside the pale of Islam? (Ishaa-at). Apart from these they had many other strange beliefs. Yet they called themselves Muslims!
The Ulema - not one of them only but hundreds - have stated clearly that by the terms Ahlil-Qiblah is meant those people who do not deny anything from among the essentials of deen.

Allanaah Shami (Rahmatullah Alayh) says:

لَاخِلَافَ فِيْ كُفْرِ الْمُخَالِفِ فِيْ ضَرُوْرِيَاتِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَاِنْ كَانَ
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ الْمُوَاظِبِ طُوْلَ عُمْرِهٖ عَلَى الطَّاعَاتِ

“There is no difference of opinion in this that the person who rejects any of the esentjajs of deen is a koafir, even though he may be of the Ahlil Qiblah and even though he may throughout his life be punctual in Ibaadah.”

In the book Ikfarul Mulhideen by Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri (Rahmatullah Alayh) it is reported on the authority of Bazzaaz (Rahmatullah Alayh):

اَهْلُ الْقِبْلَةِ فِيْ اِصْطِلَاحِ الْمُتَكَلِّمِيْنَ مَنْ يُصَدِّقُ بِضَرُوْرِيَّاتِ
الدِّيْنِ اَىْ اَلْأُمُوْرِ الَّتِىْ عُلِمَ ثُبُوْتُهَا فِى الشَّرْعِ وَاشْتُهِرَ فَمَنْ
اَنْكَرَ شَيْئًا مِّنَ الضَّرُوْرِيَاتِ كَحُدُوْثِ الْعَالَمِ وَحَشْرِ الْأَجْسَادِ

وَفَرْضِيَّةِ الصَّلٰوةِ وَالصَّوْمِ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ وَلَوْ كَانَ
مُجَاهِدًا بِالطَّاعَاتِ وَكَذٰلِكَ مَنْ بَاشَرَ شَيْئًا مِّنْ اَمَارَاتِ
التَّكْذِيْبِ كَسُجُوْدِ الصَّنَمِ وَالْاِهَانَةِ بِاَمْرٍ شَرْعِيٍّ وَالْاِسْتِهْزَاءِ
عَلَيْهِ فَلَيْسَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ وَمَعْنٰى عَدَمِ تَكْفِيْرِ اَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ اَنْ
لَايُكَفَّرَ بِارْتِكَابِ الْمَعَاصِيْ وَلَابِاِنْكَارِ الْاُمُوْرِ الْخَفِيَّةِ غَيْرِ
الْمَشْهُوْرَةِ هٰذَا مَا حَقَّقَهُ الْمُحَقِّقُوْنَ فَاحْفَظْهُ

In the terminology of the Ulema of the Mutakallimeen the Ahlil-Qiblah are those people who believe in and accepts the essentials of deen, i.e. those matters proof ofwhich in the Shariat is well-known and generally accepted for example the fact that the universe is created, the physical resurrection, the obligations of Salaah and Fasting etc. Hence whosoever denies any of these is not of the Ahlil-Qiblah even though he may exert himself to the utmost in his Thaadah (worship of Allah). Similarly, the person in whom are seen signs of his denial of any of the essentials e.g. prostration before an idol or the insulting of any tenet of Shariol or the deriding thereof, he too is not of the Ahlil-Qiblah. What the Ulema actually imply when they say that they do not call any of the Ahlil-Qiblah a kaafir, is that on account of any sin committed by him, they will nor exclude them from the fold of Islam. And similarly they will not dub him a kaafir for denying any of those matters which are not generally well-known. This is the verdict of the research scholars. Remember it. " (ikfaar)

What Imam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh) and other Ulema actually stated when they said they do not pass a verdict of kufr against the AhlilQiblah, was stated in contradiction to the Khajiri sect who believed that anyone guilty of a major sin became a kaafir. It was also meant as an answer to those who considered one denying any of the less well-known matters of Shariat a kaafir. Imam Muhammad (Rahmatullah Alayh) —the famous student and disciple of lmam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh)—himself writes in "Siyar-ul-Kabeer"

مَنْ اَنْكَرَ شَيْئًا مِّنْ شَرَائِعِ الْاِسْلَامِ فَقَدْ اَبْطَلَ قَوْلَ لَااِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

"Whosoever denies any of the Islamic sanctities has made his La Ilaha Iilallah null and void."

Yet some people maintain that after recitation of the Kalimah,one cannot be excommunicated from Islam, no matter what. If it is so, that after reciting Kalimah, one may speak whatever one likes and reject whatever he likes, then what do you think is the meaning of Allah's censuring the Jews in this verse:

اَفَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُوْنَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَّفْعَلُ
ذٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ اِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى
اَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

"Do you believe in a portion of the Scripture and disbelieve in part thereof? And what is the reward of those who do that except disgrace in this world's life and on the Day of Qiyamat they will be consigned to a grievous punishment. For Allah is not unaware of what you do? (2.85)

Most definitely and categorically only that blend of Islam is acceptable, which is with all its requisite commandments and essentials. No part may be excluded from it. To those of the Ahlil-Kitab who, after having accepted Islam, still wished to follow only some of the commandments of the Torah, Allah said:

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِيْ السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَّلَاتَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوَاتِ
الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَاجَاءَتْكُمُ
الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاعْلَمُوْا أَنَّ اللهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ

“0 you who believe enter into Islam fully and follow not the footsteps of shaytaan. Verily he is an open enemy and f you slide back after clear proofs had come to you, then know that Allah is Mighty and Wise.” (2.208)

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) (in explaining this verse) says that the Ahlil-Kitab after having accepted Islam, expressed the wish to follow only some of the commandments. Thereupon this verse was revealed that they should enter into Islam fully and accept all its teachings, not discarding any part thereof.

Akramah (Radhiallahu anhu) says that some of the Ahlil — Kitab after accepting Islam, still wanted to honour the Sabbath - Saturday. Then this verse was revealed.

Treatment of Munafiqs*

Here is yet another complaint against the Ulema. Another thing we hear these days is: “Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) even dealt with the munafiqs in the same way as he treated the Muslims. But today the Ulema go so far as to call Muslims kaafirs.” This is another part of the attack on the Ulema. Let us see how true it is:

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* Those who outwardly claimed to be Muslims yet inwardly they had no faith and were in fact enemies within the Muslim ranks.

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It is indeed correct that in the early days of Islam (in Madina) Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) treated the Muslims and the munafiqs (hypocrites) alike. Then later the following verse as well as other verses were revealed:

يَاأَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِيْنَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوٰهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ

“0 Messenger strive against the kaafirs (with weapons) and the hypocrites (with your tongue). Be harsh with them. Their ultimate abode will be hell, an unhappy journey’s end.” (9.73)

Did the treatment remain the same after the revelation of this verse and other verses with similar content? Abdullah bin Abbas (Radhiallahu anhu) reports:
“Once on a Friday Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) delivered a sermon from the mimbar and called the munafiqs one by one by their names and drove them from the Mosque. At the time Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) was not present. When he

arrived someone told him what happened saying: “Today Allah has disgraced the hypocrites.”

Sayyidina Abu Masood (Radiallahu anhu) says: “Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) delivered such a sermon as we had never heard before and he said: Whomsoever I name, get up. In this way he expelled thirty-six persons from the Masjid.” (Durr Manthoor)

Sayyidina Huzaifa (Radiallahu anhu) says: “Hypocrisy existed in the days of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Today it is either kufr or Islam.” (Bukhari)

At the time when Yazeed bin Abi Sufyan was the governor of Kufa a few Syrians were guilty of having drunk wine. Yazeed called them to account. They said that wine was lawful and quoted the verse:

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا ...

“There shall be no sin unto those who believe and do good works for what they may have eaten...” (5.93)

Yazeed reported the matter to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu). Umar (Radiallahu anhu) wrote back saying: “When this letter of mine reaches you by day, then do not wait for the night. And if it reaches you by night then do not wait for the day. Send those people to me in haste before they lead others astray.’’

The culprits were sent to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu), who consulted the other Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). They said: “These people have adopted such a thing in their dean, for which Allah did not give permission. They should be put to the sword.” However Sayyidina All (Radiallahu anhu) remained silent and Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) asked him also to give his opinion. He said: “They should be asked to clarify (why they drank). If they drank it, having considered it permissible, they should be killed, because of having made lawful what Allah had made unlawful. If they drank it, having known it to be unlawful, they should be struck eighty lashes with a whip.” (Duff Manthoor)

Now, I ask you: were these not people who recited the Kalimah? Were they not men who belonged to the Ahlil-Qiblah? Just because they drank wine, having considered it lawful, it was the unanimous decision of all these Sahabah (Radhiallahu anhum) that they be beheaded. There are many other incidents from the early era of Islam which lend support to the fact that denying one of the essentials of deen amounted to kufr and apostacy. We cannot go into all the details here. All I want to do is to draw caution about those people who say: “We do not dub anyone as a kaafir professing the Kalimah no matter what he may say or do. That is only the work of the Ulema.” These people may be sarcastic when saying so and they may taunt the Ulema. But truth of the matter is that it is the work of the Ulema to point out the kaafir. A non-AIim is neither in the position to indicate what constitutes kufr nor can he properly understand.

Together with everything said above it is also necessary to note that it is not permissible to call anyone a kaafir without proper proof from the Shariah. I have already written about this in Question 4 of this letter.

The topic discussed above only came in-between as a matter of interest. Those who denounce and insult the Ulema should take careful note of these points.

The Pious Ulema and the Learned Ulema

THE FOURTH POINT in this context of the discussion on the Ulema, is also worth considering: On the one hand we have a man with the best personal qualities, personal accomplishments and high character, and on the other hand we have a man endowed with great knowledge, understanding, academic ability and insight. These two should never be confused. Similarly, it is wrong to think that a person with the best qualities of piety and righteousness must necessarily also be endowed with similar depth of knowledge, insight and understanding. It is not so that everyone who possesses great learning must ecessarily also be a possessor of perfection or near perfection in morals and character. If it had been so then every scholar or AIim would also have been the greatest Shaikh of sufism, and then it would not have been necessary for the sufis to proceed to Khanqahs (in seclusion) for correcting personal qualities and for self-improvement. It would not have been necessary for the Shaikhs of the sufi orders to have had to struggle along austere and ascetic paths and ways towards true righteousness.

The question may be asked: But why is that the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) were endowed with all these qualities viz: Knowledge as well as piety? This comprehensiveness of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) was a special gift from Allah for them alone because it was necessary to acquire and spread everything they learnt from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). It was necessary that every kind of light that eminated from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam's) source of light, had to be made known. However, soon after the era of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) from the time of the Ta'bien onwards, separate groups of Ulema of Hadeeth, Ulema of Jurisprudence, Ulema of Quranic interpretation and sufis etc., came into being - specialists in particular fields. No doubt among these Ulema there were those who were specialists in many fields and men of varied virtues and even today there still are some like that. But most of them were specialists in one field or another. Hence, to assume generally that when a man has reached a certain rank in knowledge and academic ability, he must, as a matter of course, also be on the same rank as far as personal character, virtue and righteousness are concerned, is folly. This shows a clear lack of knowledge of the gradual changes brought about by the times.

No one can deny the fact that for the proper appreciation and benefit of knowledge, inner attainments and cardinal virtues are adornments and most necessary. But their acquisition is not indispensible for the attaining of knowledge. Knowledge does not depend on it.

Then also it is noteworthy that there is a difference between what is considered to be moral virtue and righteousness by the Ulema on the one hand and by the Shaikhs on the

other hand. It is not necessary that what constitutes righteous bahaviour according to the Ulema must also be such with sufi Shaikhs. Let us take a simple example: According to the sufis, it is at all times necessary to have a good opinion about the words and actions of a Muslim. As for the Ulema of Hadeeth, they have the duty to investigate character and to criticise and pass judgement on the personal character of anyone reporting Hadeeth. (Al-Jarho wat Ta'deel). The result is that often the Hadeeth reported by some sufis are questionable and objected to by the Ulema. This is because the sufis accept the Hadeeth reported by any believer as they have a good opinion about a believer and have faith in him. On the other hand the Ulema have to cross-examine, criticise and investigate circumstances. This art of investigation has become a special branch of Islamic knowledge with its own specialist Ulema and Imams.

Thus as far as the Ulema are concerned, the main thing is this, whether the words spoken by them are in accordance with the Quran and Hadeeth or not, whether it coincides with the tenets of the deen or not, whether it falls within the scope of what was taught by the saintly ancestors or not -even though there may be some failure in their reaching the highest form of proper Islamic righteousness in their doings.

Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu) says: "We asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): 'Is it so that we may not enjoin any good works until we ou selves had done them, and that we may not prohibit the doing of bad deeds until we ourselves had ceased to do this?"
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "No, do enjoin good works even though you do not yourselves practise them. And prohibit evil works even though you yourselves have not stopped doing so." (Jami-ul-Fawaid, Jami-ul-Sagheer)

Gradual Decline of the Ulema

THE FIFTH POINT worth considering is the fact that the effects of the changes of the times is upon everything. How can the Ulema escape these same effects? The further we proceed from the era of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) the more will mischief and evil be on the increase. Now, while we are prepared to admit every kind of weakness and decline within ourselves, we expect that the Ulema should still be faithful to the same old scene of the calibre of the Ulema of long ago. For them that is still the yard stick. When the discussion is on physical strength and endurance, everyone cries: "Alas, where are those erstwhile physical powers to be found today?" But when the spiritual faculties and yeomen struggles for knowledge come under discussion, everyone expects and desires to see the attributes and qualities of Junayd, Shibli, Gazzali and Bukhari. We should at least remember that this decline in knowledge has been prophecised by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

لَايَأْتِيْ عَلَيْكُمْ عَامٌ وَلَايَوْمٌ إِلَّا وَالَّذِىْ بَعْدَهُ شَرٌّ مِّنْهُ حَتّٰى تَلْقَوْا رَبَّكُمْ

"No year or day will dawn upon you except that which follows will be worse for you until you shall meet your Lord."

Munadi says that this prediction concerns the deen and it includes the majority of people - not all. Hence none can object to it by saying that many are not included in the generality of the statement. Alqamah reports tht Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) said: “No day will come when the following day will not be less in respect of knowledge. And when there will be no Ulema to enjoin good works and prohibit from evil, all will come to destruction.” (Jami-us-Sagheer)

According to a Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “The pious ones will pass away one by one and people will be left like rotten barley or bad, (worm-infested) dates, of whom Allah will take no notice.” (Mishkat, Bukhari)

So we see that there will be decline in religious application and deem attitudes. There will be weakness and lessening of zeal. Therefore under these circumstances while striving for goodness and well-being one should look upon the present situation. In this present era the people who have seen the eminent elders and derived spiritual benefit from their company and grace, now turn away from elders of the following generation because they have found them to be somewhat different. Hence they avoid contact with later successors. In this respect I have seen many people who had seen and been in the company of Hazrat Ganghohi. After the death of this eminent saintly peronality, they did not turn to his most eminent spiritual successors, (Khulafaa)

Moulana Khalil Ahmed Saharanpuri, Hazrat Moulana Shaikhul-Hind, Hazrat Moulana Abdul Raheem Raipuri (May Allay fill their graves with floor). In this they deprived themselves of further spiritual good for these saintly ones were bastions of guidance. Similarly many of the mureeds who had been attached to these personalities, did not later, after their death, turn towards their successors, because they compared the successors to the predecessors and found them to be less eminent. The successors were thus not held in the same esteem. Even these ones too only deprived themselves of great benefit and further spiritual advancement. These people should have realized tht those who had passed will never return and those who will come will be worse than what is with us now. What is to be seen is this: does this person follow and act upon the essentials of deen or not, because whosoever denies any of the essentials of deen is outside the pale of Islam. Then, the more a person is desirous of following the Sunnah, the more well-guided he will be, for real guidance lies in the Sunnah, and conforming to it.

THE SIXTH POINT that is worth consideration is that the Ulema are men born from among us. They are not some creatures born and bred elsewhere. Hence the people among whom they are born and the envirom-nent will have its influence on them. As the iron, so the sword. As the clay, so the utensil. As the copper so will be its gilt.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

خِيَارُكُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ خِيَارُكُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَقِهُوْا

“The ones among you who were the best in the time of ignorance will be the best of you in Islam, when they become Alims.

This statement is true even now. When the ones who are endowed with inborn noble character, acquire knowledge, they reach high ranks in virtue. This does not only apply to knowledge of deen alone. The same holds good for secular knowledge. See the men devoid of any inborn noble traits; when having acquired education they are placed in responsible, high posts, they cause people untold misery by resorting to accepting and inducing bribes and to persecuting the poor people.
Now I ask you, if the best brains and the noble ones of the Muslim community do not incline towards acquiring deem education, is it a fault of the Ulema or is it their fault?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once on mentioning the signs of the coming of Qiyamat said that there will be much evil being committed among the high ranking ones, authority will lie with the low ones, while knowledge will be with those of low status and the good ones will practise hypocrisy. (Ishaa-at). Another Hadeeth in Ishaa-at states that knowledge will be acquired from ones of low birth. This meant that the eminent people - those high in rank and status will - through their love for wealth and love for splendour - not find the time for acquiring deeni knowledge. What a great injustice to themselves and to all. That men possessing wealth and having the opportunity, with no pre-occupations should waste their lives and time in fruitless, useless, perishing efforts!!! When such people appear before Allah, will they be able to produce any proper excuse for their failures?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “The feet of man will not be allowed to move away from where he will stand before Allah on the Day of Qiyamat, until he has answered five questions (satisfactorily): How he has spent his lifetime, in which direction he had spent his youth (for Allah’s pleasure or displeasure), from where he had earned his wealth, in which way he had spent it and how he had acted upon the knowledge he had acquired.” (Mishkat)

Those people who are wasting their lives, which is in itself a gift from Allah, on anything other than for Allah’s pleasure, should themselves think what they are going to answer. They should know that in Allah’s Court no effort of any lawyer or advocate will be of any use. Neither will glib-tongued eloquence or false witnesses or false evidence be of any avail. Everyone should prepare his answers to these five questions. He will surely be called to give account of his actions in the Most Supreme Court of all.

In the discussion on this sixth point it is actually my aim to draw attention to the fact that personal surroundings, offspring and inherited traits have an influence on one’s character. Thus Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “The Imaams will be from the Quraish.”

Once Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) was walking about at night keeping watch over Medina. After roaming about for some time, he came to stand by a wall. He was tired. Then he heard the voice of an old lady giving a command to a young girl: “Mix some water with the milk.”

The girl replied: “No, an order has been given by the Caliph which forbids that.”

The old lady said: “Is the Ameer then sitting here looking at what we are doing? Do as I tell you.”

The girl replied: “This is a very undesirable thing that in his presence the Ameer be obeyed but that he should be disobeyed in his absence. This I will never do.”

Sayyidina Umar (Radialiahu anhu) marked that house in his mind and the next morning he sent a message to that house proposing marriage to that girl on behalf of his son, Aasim. From the children of that girl a man like Umar bin Abdul Aziz was born.
(Izalatul - Khifa)

THE SEVENTH POINT worth considering with regard to the Ulema is: What kind of persons are normally chosen by the community for academic occupations and for deem services? You will notice that when a man has many sons, they will all first be engaged in acquiring secular education. Every effort will be made for this, and every sacrifice. When however the boy turns out to be a failure, then in utter disappointment he may be entrusted to the care of some deen madrasah for deen education. Is not this a great insult and unjustice of deen and to knowledge of the deen? Will this man not be called to account before Allah? Very few indeed are the families where it is the precise and exclusive object that the children acquire deeni knowledge. Otherwise they will only turn to madrasahs after the colleges have failed to deliver the goods.

You will also see that generally the students who attend Arabic and deeni madrasahs are those who because of the poverty and indigence of their parents and guardians are unable to attend colleges for secular education. In other words they are those who are unable to pay for their education. They will be the needy and poor. These students sometimes even have to resort to begging. The fact that occasionally they have to beg is not a reflection upon their lack of honour, but is in fact a reflection upon the negligence and indifference of those persons who do not look upon it as their responsibility to see to their needs. When the wealthy donors undertake to see to all these students’ needs, is it not also their responsibility according to Shariat and to reason that they also fulfil all their human requirements and daily needs? This is the reason why we see in this age of decline that after having acquired deem knowledge, many capable, clever and sharp-minded Alims say goodbye to leading the life of an Aiim, whose life in the eyes of the worldly-orientated ones is a despicable one. They leave the life of want and poverty and proceed to study medicine, or try to obtain some university degree etc. Soon you see them engaged in worldly occupations like the civil or the public services or you will find them engaged in business. Gradually then, they become complete strangers to the knowledge which they had acquired after tremendous obstacles and trials.

Now in the first place the admission to these madrasahs are few. Then secondly, we see the majority of them leaving the madrasahs. I am not trying to lay the blame for this at the door of anyone. But look at this: A few brothers are the owners of a certain piece of property. This needs to be looked after and managed, but all of them are in service somewhere else. I am sure that by all the means at their disposal, by begging, promises,

flattery, they will get one of them to resign his job to manage the property and to draw his salary from the joint account. For making this sacrifice they will have to be under his obligation. He will try to make them dance to his tune. Why will they do all this? Simply because the property has to be looked after, lest it wastes away and be lost to all of them.
But similarly, there is a need for a man who knows the answers to deem questions and gives guidance. This need is not for the brothers alone, not only for the people of any village or town but for all the people of every locality. Is there not a need for deen? Is there no danger of the deen wasting away out of our lives? If that happens is it not the loss for all? Today some people want to become Alims after oniy reading a few tracts in Urdu and having done so, give themselves out to be Ulema. How foolish we are when we realise that Allah had commanded that for such a great thing as Jihad everyone should not go, so that such a party remains behind to seek knowledge. Thus we read at the end of Surah Towbah:

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ .....

"Nor should the believers all go forth together; if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in the deen and admonish their people when they return to them - that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil)." (IX v 122)

THE EIGHTH POINT which must also be considered is the fact that when the Ulema are compared with the specialists of other branches of knowledge, they should be compared with men of the same rank and calibre. It is greatly unjust to compare one who according to knowledge or lifestyle is of the highest calibre with one from another field where he is adjudged to the lowest degree. Regarding everyone one should ask: "If this man had not acquired knowledge, what kind of morals or qualities would he have had, and what occupation would he have taken by virtue of his environment and position therein. And how much has he benefitted and been improved by knowledge."

I have mentioned these few points for consideration. If one thinks hard, many other points could possibly be added to them. Whatever is written here was done in restraint. The poet says in Urdu: کہنا پڑا مجھے پئے الزام پسند گو ۔ وہ ماجرا جو قابل شرح و بیاں نہیں

"Forced was I to explain due to the attacks of him who showers us with blame to explain that tale which is beyond me, to explain and narrate."

Ulema-e-Haq and Ulema-e-Soo

Now after having written all that, I have to admit that there are two kinds of Ulema - the true ones (Ulema-e-haq) and the false or evil ones (Ulema-e-soo). In the Hadeeth there very grave warnings of dreadful things awaiting the Ulema-e-soo. They are among those who will be first to enter into hell. They are astray and are leading others astray. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "A person who seeks knowledge with the object of acquiring worldly riches, will not even smell the fragrance of Jannat." (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said: “Whosoever acquired knowledge for the purpose of attracting people to be inclined towards him, will be cast into hell.”(Targheeb)
And also: “The worst of people have the worst Ulema.” (Targheeb)

It is also reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:
“Knowledge is of two kinds. One type is that which is only on the tongue (having no effect upon the heart). This is Allah’s proof against men (that He completed His argument). The other type is that which is in the heart and is beneficial knowledge.”

In another Hadeeth he (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “In the latter days the devout ones (sufis) will be ignorant and the Ulema immoral.”

And also: “Seek not knowledge in order to contest with the Ulema and to argue with the ignorant ones and to attract people towards you by it. Those who do this will be cast into hell.”

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: “On behalf of this Ummat lam most fearful of the Alim who is a hypocrite.”

People asked: “Who is a hypocritical AIim?”

Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu anhu) replied: “He is one who by tongue is an Alim but in his heart he is ignorant.”

Sayyidina Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Do not become such that in spite of having acquired the knowledge of the Ulema and become acquainted with the deep researches of the thinkers, you behave and act in the manner of ignorant fools.”

Hazrat Ebrahim bin Ummaya was asked: “Which person will be most ashamed and sorry?”

He replied: “The ashamed one in this world is he who obliges an ungrateful one. And the ashamed one and sorry one at the time of death is that Alim who exceeded the limits.”

Sayyidina Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) also said: “The tonnent of the Ulema will be the death of the heart. The death of the heart is seen in this that with the deeds of the Hereafter he earns the benefits of this world.”

Hazrat Yahya bin Ma’az (Radiallahu anhu) says: “When with knowledge and wisdom worldly benefits are earned, that knowledge loses its splendour and brilliance.”

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) observed: “When you see any Alim who loves worldly riches, consider him to be a suspect (and guard your deen) for whosoever loves a thing becomes entangled with it.”

Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (Radiallahu anhu) said: “I have read in ancient books that Allah says: When an Alim begins to love this world, the least that I do to him is that from his heart I take away the pleasure out of his conversing with Me in prayer.”(Ihya)

All these statements quoted above and many other similar quotations undoubtedly refer to the Ulema-e-soo - the evil ones among the Ulema. However the verdict of whether such-and-such an AIim or party belongs to this category or of the true Ulema is not for anyone to give. This also lies under the Shariat to be decided according to its stipulations. It is completely wrong that when any Aiim speaks in favour of our views, we consider and laud him as being of the true Ulema. But when he says anything against our opinions, he is immediately branded as being of the Ulema-e-soo, ready to be sacrificed. What is this that until yesterday our opinion about some political party was favourable? Hence this Alim and all those who were in favour of this party’s political policy were lauded as Ulema-e-haq. But now ou? views regarding that party had changed overnight. And now all the Ulema who supported that party have their names added to the list of Ulema-e-soo!

The criterion as to whether any Alim is of the true or evil Ulema is only this:
How does he respond in action to the tenets of the Holy Quran and Hadeeth? That is all. But so have we changed that with our own crooked understanding, our emotions and under the influence of the unbelievers we set up some policy. Whosoever agreed with it of the Ulema is lauded to be a great Allamah, a great scholar, well-versed and acquainted with the needs of the nation, an expert on the intricacies and mysteries of the deen - even if this self same lauded one is an ignorant and an uneducated fool, having no touch with Quran and Hadeeth. On the other hand the truly great Ulema who oppose our opinion, in spite of being really experts in matters of Shariat and truly well-acquainted with the needs of the nation, will be ridiculed, jeered and abused with the meanest and vilest of words. What a tragedy!

Note that in many respects there were major differences of opinion betwen the sufis - with their esoteric knowledge, clairvoyance, and their internal sciefles - and the external Ulema, the formalists. But the pious ancestors did not even give the sufis the right to adopt any such views which were contrary to the formalist Ulema. The books of the experts abound with sayings to this effect.

ñazrat Mujaddid Alfi-Thani (Sayed Ahmed Sirhindi) (Rahmatullah Alayh) wrote in one of his letters which was written to Moulana Amanullah Faqeeh: “The foremost belief that is necessary for any wayfarer of the sufi path, is that which the Ulema of the Ahlus sunnah wal Jamaat have elicited and deduced from the Quran and the Hadeeth and the relics of the predecessors. Then it is also necessary to adhere to those meanings of the Quran and the Hadeeth which the Ulema have understood from the Book and the Sunnah. If by any chance, any other meaning should become known through illumination (kashf) or inspiration (ilhaam) which is to the contrary, it is not acceptable or credible or to be taken seriously. One should seek refuge from such meanings and beseech Allah to take us out of this vortex and that He may manifest that which is in accordance with the opinion of the true Ulema.

One should not express anything contrary to their opinion, but should rather try to make that which was unveiled to him consonant with those meanings which the learned Ulema had understood. Any meaning that becomes disclosed to the inner heart and which is contrary to the meanings understood by them is not at all reliable or acceptable and absolutely null and void. It is a fact that every perverted one wished to prove the correctness of his views from the Quran and Hadeeth alone.

يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيْرًا وَّيَهْدِىْ بِهِ كَثِيْرًا

"He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby."(lIv 26)

And this fact, that the meanings understood by these learned men alone is correct, is so because they have understood these meanings from the sayings of the Sahabah and the Tab'ien, (May Allah be pleased with them all). They have derived them from the Light of the Stars of Guidance. Hence eternal salvation and everlasting well-being is their lot and their destiny.

أُوْلَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

"La, they are Allah's party. Verily Allah's party is the successfiul ones. (LVIIIv 22)

Just because some Ulema, in spite of being of sound belief, show some faults in masaail and are guilty of some sinful lapses in their deeds, it is absolute injustice to degrade them and turn them away from the entire class of Ulema, or to ridicule all of them. In fact to reject them means rejection of most of the essentials of deen, because these people are the ones who show the way of the essentials of deen and they are the ones who discriminate between right and wrong.

لَوْ لَانُوْرُ هِدَايَتِهِمْ لَمَا اهْتَدَيْنَا وَلَوْ لَاتَمْيِيْزُهُمُ الصَّوَابَ عَنِ
الْخَطَاءِ لَغَوَيْنَا وَهُمُ الَّذِيْنَ بَذَلُوْا جُهْدَهُمْ فِي إِعْلَاءِ كَلِمَةِ الدِّيْنِ
الْقَوِيْمِ وَأَسْلَكُوْا طَوَائِفَ كَثِيْرَةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ
الْمُسْتَقِيْمِ فَمَنْ تَابَعَهُمْ نَجٰى وَأَفْلَحَ وَمَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ ضَلَّ وَأَضَلَّ

"But for the light emanating from them we would not have been guided aright, and but for their discriminating between right and wrong we would have gone astray. They are the people who spent their efforts in elevating the firm deen and guide many to the straight path. Whosoever follows them will be successfi4l and reach salvation and whosoever opposes them is astray, leading others astray." (Vol. 1 Chapter 5 Maktoob p 286)

The Shaikh says in another place:

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ كَلَامَهُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ مُطَابِقًا بِأَحْكَامِ الشَّرِيْعَةِ فَلَا اعْتِبَارَ
لَهُ أَصْلًا فَكَيْفَ يَصْلُحُ لِلْحُجَّةِ وَالتَّقْلِيْدِ وَإِنَّمَا الصَّالِحُ لِلْحُجَّةِ
وَالتَّقْلِيْدِ أَقْوَالُ الْعُلَمَاءِ مِنْ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ فَمَا وَافَقَ أَقْوَالَهُمْ مِنْ
كَلَامِ الصُّوْفِيَّةِ يُقْبَلُ وَمَا خَالَفَهُمْ لَا يُقْبَلُ

"You should know that, if the words of the sufis are not in accordance with Shari at, then it is not acceptable at all, so how can it be proof and good to follow? Only the words of the Ulema of the Sunnah are good as proof and to follow. Those words of the sufis which

are in agreement with the words of the Ulema are reliable and that which are against are unacceptable." (Vol. 1, 5th letter p 289)

Such is the view of the honoured sufis whose hearts are truly enlightened. This is the view of those who have in themselves the true spirit of sacrifice for the Glory of Allah, the dignity of the deen and deem matters. Yet they consider their statements to be not worthy of proof or worthy of being followed except with the consent of the Ulema. What credibility can possibly be attributed to the statements and actions of those who are not even acquainted with deen, who have never had any defmite relationships with the Quran, Ahaadeeth and the words of the saintly predecessors?

Look at these foolish people! They merely happened to glance at some translation of the Holy Quran, understood some particular meaning on some particular subject and now look upon themselves as eminent independent mujtahids!! Now whatever any Aiim or all the Ulema of the world may say, is considered to be nonsense, useless. Can they not realize that the meaning of the Quran and Hadeeth is that which the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) explained and according to which they acted. Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُلْحِدُوْنَ فِيْ آيَاتِنَا لَايَخْفَوْنَ عَلَيْنَا .....

"Verily those who distort our Revelation, they are not hidden from Us. Is he who is cast into the fire better, or he who comes secure on the Day of Qiyamat. Do as you will. He is the See — er of what you do." (XLIv 40)

In Durr Manthoor the intrepretation of apostasy (flhad) according to many Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) and Tab'ien has been stated to result even from ascribing to one verse of the Quran a meaning other than that intended. It is also noteworthy that there are numerous Ahaadeeth wherein the exhortation to follow the pious ancestors is stressed.

عَنِ الْعِرْبَاضِ بْنِ سَارِيَةَ صَلّٰى بِنَا رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ ثُمَّ اَقْبَلَ عَلَيْنَا بِوَجْهِهٖ فَوَعَظَنَا مَوْعِظَةً بَلِيْغَةً ذَرَفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُيُوْنُ وَوَجِلَتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوْبُ فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ يَارَسُوْلَ اللهِ كَاَنَّ هٰذِهٖ مَوْعِظَةُ مُوَدِّعٍ فَاَوْصِنَا فَقَالَ اُوْصِيْكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ وَالسَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ وَاِنْ كَانَ عَبْدًا حَبْشِيًّا فَاِنَّهٗ مَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ بَعْدِىْ فَسَيَرٰى اِخْتِلَافًا كَثِيْرًا فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِىْ وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِيْنَ الْمَهْدِيِّيْنَ تَمَسَّكُوْابِهَا وَعَضُّوْا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِذِ وَاِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحْدَثَاتِ الْاُمُوْرِ فَاِنَّ كُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ

Sayyidina Erbaaz bin Saariyah (Radiallahu anhu) reports: 'One day Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) led us in Fajr Salaah and afterwards, facing us, delivered a sermon most eloquent and touching, that tears rolled from our eyes and hearts trembled with fear. A man said to him: "0 Messenger of Allah, it seems as if this is a farewell sermon. Give us further advice."

Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "I advise you to fear Allah and to obey the ruler even though he may be a negro slave. Whosoever lives on after me will certainly see much dissension. So hold onto my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-

guided Khulafaa. Hold fast onto it; hold onto it with your teeth. I advise you against following the new innovations in deen for every new thing is a bid-ah and every bida 't is deviation." (Ahmed, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhy, Ibn Majah, Mishkat)

Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu) wrote a very important letter regarding the observance of the Sunnah and the following of the example of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). This letter which is quoted in Abu Dhwood's Saheeh is of such importance that each and every word of it should be carefully taken into consideration. Among other things he wrote therein:

فما دونهم من مقصر وما فوقهم من محسر وقد قصر دونهم فجفوا وطمح عنهم أقوام فغلوا وإنهم بين ذلك لعلى هدى مستقيم

"Failure to follow them is a great fault and to exceed their example is merely to tire yourself A certain group failed to follow them and thus committed injustice and another exceeded their example and thus transgressed. The holy Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) are on a path of guidance between these extremes."

It is reported from this very same Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu) that he said:

"Taking hold of the road laid down by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallarn) and his successors after him is to confirm belief in the Book of Allah and to give obedience to Him and in this lies the strength of the deen. None has any right to bring about any changes therein or to modify and the opinions of anyone who opposes anything therein is of no sequence and unworthy of consideration. Whosoever follows their path, is rightly guided. Whosoever acquires help from them, is successful. Whosoever acts contrary to them and adopts a way besides that of the believers, Allah will not allow him to act according to his adopted way and will cast him into hell. That is indeed a very bad place of refuge." (Shifa)

May Allah grant us the ability to follow every footstep of these saintly predecessors! Ameen!

وما ذلك على الله بعزيز

"That is not a hard thing for Allah." (XXXVvJ7)

From all that has been written here, it must have become very clear that to follow and obey the Ulema-e-haq is of the utmost importance and necessity. Not to honour them is cause for our own ruin and doom. Should any statement of theirs not be understood, the fault lies with our lack of understanding. On the other hand, should any uttering of theirs be found to be clearly contrary to Shanat it is not permissible after due consideration, to accept it. If such an occasion does arise, it still is no cause for keeping yourself aloof from them. That will only entail great harm to yourself in the rest of your religious afiairs. (This would have been clear from the advice of Sayyidina Ma'az Radiallahu anhu, quoted previously).

As opposed to this, we have the word of the Uiema-e-soo. Their words are not worth paying attention to, not suitable for following and from them one should remain aloof. But when anything of theirs is in accordance with the Shariat, it is worthy of practice and must be taken and accepted. It should however be noted that to be able to ascertain whether anything said is in accordance with the Shariat or against it, depends on sound knowledge of the Shariat. This cannot merely be done on the basis of one's opinion. Just as it is a grave sin to introduce a non-shari' thing into the deen as part of it, so also is it a sin to reject anything which is indeed part of the Shariat. When such a thing crops up about which there is any doubt (as to whether it actually belongs to the Shariat) one should be careful and act with discretion.

عَنِ النُّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيْرٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
اَلْحَلَالُ بَيِّنٌ وَالْحَرَامُ بَيِّنٌ وَبَيْنَهُمَا مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ لَايَعْلَمُهُنَّ كَثِيْرٌ مِّنَ
النَّاسِ فَمَنِ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ اِسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِيْنِهٖ وَعِرْضِهٖ وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي
الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ كَالرَّاعِيْ يَرْعٰى حَوْلَ الْحِمٰى يُوْشِكُ
اَنْ يَّرْتَعَ فِيْهِ اَلَا وَاِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَلِكٍ حِمًى اَلَا وَاِنَّ حِمَى اللهِ مَحَارِمُهٗ
اَلَا وَاِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً اِذَا صَلُحَتْ صَلُحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهٗ
وَاِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهٗ اَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ

Sayyidina Nu'man bin Basheer (Radiallahu anhu) said that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The lawful things are clear and the unlawful things are clear. Between them lie the doubtful things, which many people do not know. Whosoever withholds himself from the doubtful things, keeps his deen and honour clean and safe (from blemish) and whosoever partakes of doubtful things, will fall into the unlawful. Like the herdsmen who grazes his animals in the vicinity of (the) prohibited territory. Behold there is such a prohibited area for all things. Beware, the prohibited !erritory fixed by Allah consists of those things He had made unlawful."

"Beware that in the body lies one such organ, that if this organ is sound, the whole body is sound, and if this organ is unsound the whole body is unsound. Verily that organ is the heart." (Mishkat, Muslim, Bukhari)

عَنْ اِبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رضقَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَلْاَمْرُ
ثَلٰثَةٌ اَمْرٌ بَيِّنٌ رُشْدُهٗ فَاتَّبِعْهُ وَاَمْرٌ بَيِّنٌ غَيُّهٗ فَاجْتَنِبْهُ وَاَمْرٌ اُخْتُلِفَ
فِيْهِ فَكِلْهُ اِلَى اللهِ

Sayyidina Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) says that Rasulullab (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Things are of three kinds. One kind is that whose truth is clearly evident. Follow it. Another is that whose falsehood is clearly evident, abstain from it. And yet another is that in which is a difference of opinion (where its truth or falsehood is not clearly evident); entrust it to Allah."

"Entrust it to Allah" in this context means not to pass any verdict about it, truth or falsehood without any sound supporting shari' evidence. It is of the utmost necessity to bear this in mind that Islam is such a religion based on Revealed Texts. For every single one of its tenets there must be a text (from Quran or Hadeeth). Allah and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had not left any matter of the deen without a decision — categorically about its essentials. Thus there is no way of avoiding the following of

Rasulullah (Sallailahu Alayhi Wasailam's) statements and actions and alsc the statements of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum), the Tab'ien and the Ai'mniah-eMujtahideen. For this reason the seeking of knowledge is compulsory on every single Muslim because one can never be aware of the commandments of deen without knowledge. So it is necessary for every Muslim to acquaint himself with the necessities of deen. If this is not possible, then one should inquire from some qualified Alim.

Those people who make derogatory statements about the Ulema, saying that they are good for nothing, useless non-entities and that they refuse to accept their word, only involve themselves in more problems. It means that if really they have no faith in the Ulema, then there is no other way out for them but to go forth and seek the necessary knowledge themselves so as to acquaint themselves with the deem requirements to act upon.

Remember that in the presence of Allah on the Day of Qiyamat we shall not be asked how many degrees we have obtained for worldly status. We shall not be asked how much money we had earned and deposited in the banks and vaults. The thing that will be of major importance in the presence of Allah and about which surely everyone will be asked is the deen for which alone we were created. The categorical decision from the Quran is:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ مَآ اُرِيْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّمَا
اُرِيْدُ اَنْ يُّطْعِمُوْنَ اِنَّ اللهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُوا الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِيْنِ

"I have not created men and jinn for any purpose except that they worship Me. I seek neither livelihood from them nor that they feed Me. 1.0 Allah, He is the granter of livelihood, the Lord of unbreakable might. (LI v 56,58)

In another place Allah says:

وَاْمُرْ اَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَانَسْئَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ
نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوٰى

And enjoin upon thy people worship and be constant therein. We ask not of thee provisions. We provide for thee. And the good ending is for the righteous. (XXL v 132).
Note that I am not trying to prohibit the earning and accumulation of wealth. My aim is to point out that the object of our creation is this that we observe the deen, worship Allah and be obedient to Him.

Anything else apart from this is as a result of our incapability and lack of patience and is not our main objective in life. Clear difference should be made between what is intended and what is unintended and not called for. It should not be like we find today, where the moustache (not called for) exceeds the beard (which Shariat advocated).

Hence I wish to give you some special advice: When at night you proceed to lie down after having disposed of all the daily engagements, ponder for a while over this: How much of this days' hours have I spent in IBAADAH and for the DEEN, which is the real objective; and how much time I spent on useless, vain worldly pursuit? Compare the times spent on both and ascertain the ratio between them. It should actually be such that if the time spent in deeni pursuits do not exceed the worldly ones, then both should at

least be equal. When deen is the real object, the real aim of our lives, then all that is essential to its well-being also becomes part of the object, and falls in its category. In Durr Manthoor, it is quoted from the Ulema of fiqah that the seeking of so much of knowledge is obligatory upon a person wherewith he can safeguard his deen.

Allama Shami has said that together with the obligatory duties of Islam, it is also compulsory to acquire that much knowledge which is required for the protection and continuance of his deen. Hence, after learning the principles of deen, it is also necessary for every Muslim to learn the commands and details of practice of wudu, ghusl, Salaah, Fasting, the rules regarding Zakaat for him who has wealth and the rules regarding Haj for him who has a little more. Similarly, for him whose occupation is business, it is necessary to study the rules and regulations regarding buying and selling. Similarly, for every person engaged in any specific profession it is necessary to learn the Shari' rules and regulations regarding that particular field.

In the book Tab-yeen-ul-Mahaarim it is stated: "There is absolutely no doubt therein that it is necessary for every man to learn the five pillars of Islam. So also is it necessary to learn SINCERITY because the correctness (and acceptance by Allah) of deeds depend upon it. Similarly it is necessary to learn what is lawful and what is unlawful. One must also learn what it means to perform deeds "for show" because one's deeds are deprived of reward due to hypocrisy. Then one must also learn what jealousy and egotism is because these devour good deeds just as fire consumes fuel. Similarly it is necessary to learn the regulations of buying, selling, marriage and divorce for those perSons involved in these matters. A man must also learn those words, the use and uttering of which is unlawful, leading to the brink of KUFR. And I swear by Allah that in these times these things are even more necessary to learn because the masses quite often utter such blasphemous words unconsciously and unknowingly." (Shaami)

It stands to reason that when the learning of all these things are necessary, there is only one out of two ways out. First of all one should either learn them oneself, which is best. If however this cannot be done (for some reason or other) one should seek the help of a reliable, dependable and Allah fearing AIim. Such a person's advice should be sought, and should be followed. However if anyone refuses to take any of these two paths the rsult will only be too obvious. Ignorance of the law generally is no excuse, so how can it be an excuse in matters of the Law of Shariat. If expressing opinions without knowledge is not a path leading to the path of those who are astray, then what else is it?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
إِنَّ اللهَ لَايَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ اِنْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ لٰكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ
بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ حَتّٰى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمًا اِتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُسًا جُهَّالًا
فَسُئِلُوْا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوْا وَأَضَلُّوْا

"Allah will not take away knowledge in such manner that He removes it from the breasts of men. But knowledge will be lifted in this manner that the Ulema will pass away (while others will not seek knowledge). When no Ulema will remain, people will make the

ignorant ones their guides. They will be asked questions and they will issue fatwas (ruling on religious issues) without knowledge, whereby they will go astray and lead others astray." (Mishkat)

It is indeed a fact that no one can perform in any field of occupation without leasing that trade. So how can one practice deen without learning? That is clearly stated in numerous Ahaadeeth.

For example:

انما العلم بالتعلم

"Knowledge is only acquired through learning."

May Allah in His Infinite Grace grant both you and me the ability to acquire knowledge! Ameen!

QUESTION 7

The Differences between the Ulema

Question: Much harm is caused by the difference of opinion among the Ulema.
Answer: I did not quite understand what you meant by this. I have always held the view that the differences of opinion among the Ulema is a great Mercy from Allah. You will remember that in the class during my lectures on Hadeeth, I on numerous occasions, made this statement whenever any mas'ala or any difference of opinion was noted, that in this there was much ease for the Ummat. This is because thereby there was, apart from practicing that Hadeeth, also scope for following different lines of action for which, according to shar'i laws, there was a definite sanction from the Shariat. And in those masaail, wherein there was no difference of opinion, only one line of action was left.

Because this Umrnat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) will never reach consensus on any such point which is wrong and astray, it has been noted as one of the specialities of this best of nations that it will never reach complete agreement to follow or believe such a thing which is false and astray. Whenever this Ummat will reach consensus on any point, that also will be the verdict of Allah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself said: "My Ummat will never reach consensus on that which is astray and false.''

Many Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) reported this Hadeeth and in another place Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "1 prayed to Allah that my Ummat should never reach consensus on that which is wrong and false. Allah granted this plea of mine."

In another Hadeeth it is reported that Allah has preserved you from three things. Among them is this that you will never reach agreement on that which is wrong and false.

Hafiz Iraqi (Rahmatullah Alayh) says: “This consensus pertains to a general consensus in all spheres, in word, deed, belief, shar’i matters and in meanings of words.”

Now you can think for yourself: Look at those so-called “enlightened” ones, who out of their own “enlightenment” introduce into the Shariat such a thing, which is not in accordance with what was taught by our predecessors and is in fact against their general consensus. If this is not manifest error and falsehood, then what else can you call it? On the other hand, where these men of truth disagreed on something it means that in this matter there is some latitude and scope for different points of view. Many statements of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) support this.

Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu) who is called Umar the Second and whose Caliphate is considered to be similar to that of the four rightly guided Caliphs said:

مَاسَرَّنِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ) لَمْ يَخْتَلِفُوْا لِأَنَّهُمْ لَوْ
لَمْ يَخْتَلِفُوْا لَمْ تَكُنْ رُخْصَةٌ

“I would not have been pleased if the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhu) of Muhammed (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had not differed in opinion because if they did not have dfferences of opinion among them there would not have been any scope for divergent viewpoints.”

Imam Darmy (Rahmatullah Alayh) also quoted a similar statement by Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu). And then wrote: “Then Umar sent messages throughout his dominion to this effect that the people of every area should act in accordance with the fatwas of their own Ulema.”

Hazrat Own bin Abdullah a famous Qari and god-fearing Tabi-ee says: “I would not rejoice if there was differences of opinion among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) , because if those noble ones had reached unanimous decisions and anyone acted against it, he would be an abandoner of the Sunnat. And if they differed and a person followed the view of any from among them, he does not proceed beyond the limits of the Sunnat.”

(Darmy)

Abdullah bin Mubarak - a very noted Imam says: “Any view which is contrary to the Quran and Hadeeth is unacceptable. Neither is the view of anyone acceptable in the face of the unanimous consensus of the Sahabah (Radiallabu anhum). However where there is any difference of opinion among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum), we will choose to follow that view which is nearest to the Quran and Fladeeth. “In another place he said: “We shall not go beyond the statements of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum).” (Introduction to Owjazul-Masaalik).

In both Duff Manthoor and Shaami it is stated that the differences among the Mujtahid Imams is a mercy, and the more stronger the differences, the more the mercy. And I ask you, when was there ever a time or era when there was no such differences - whether in the early days of Islam or later? In fact since the beginning of the world there has never been a time when truth-seekers did not disagree. Yet Allah, Most High Himself sent down one religion to all His Prophets. In the basic principles the deen remained the same but in the details there was always differences. Did not

differences occur in the many judgementS of Nabi Dawood and Nabi Sulayman (Alayhis Salaam). And in spite of these differences, did not Allah praise both of them?
Allah says:

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا

"And we made Sulayman to understand (the case) And unto each of them we gave judgement and knowledge." (21.78, 79)

This shows that Dawood's (Alayhis Salaam) judgement too was not against the Shariat. (Bayanul Quran)

Differences between Abu Bakr and Umar (Radlallahu anhum)

Then listen further: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "In the heavens there are two angels. One commands severity and the other commands leniency. Both are right. One is Jibreel and the other is Mika-ecl (Alayhis Salaam). And there are two Prophets, one commands- severity and the other leniency and both are right. One is Ibraheem, the other Nuh (Alayhis Salaam). . .And there are two of my Companions. One commands severity and the other leniency and both are right. The one is Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and the other is Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu)." (JamiSagheer, Tabrani, Ibn Asaakir).

While keeping this in mind, you should know that the Ulema of this Ummat, the sufis and all the pre-eminent ones of every era always had some forms of differences. Sometimes due to their differences of disposition and nature the opinions of some truth-seeking, practicing Ulema inclined towards severity and harsh-attitudes. Some others again considered leniency to be more necessary in the same affair.

The difference of opinion between Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) and Umar (Radiallahu anhu) with regard to what should be done to the prisoners of Badr, is of this kind. Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) says that when those taken prisoner at Badr were brought foward, Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Ya Rasulullah! these people belong to your tribe and they are your relatives. Leave them alive and kill them not, for it is quite possible that they will repent."

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Ya Rasulullah. These people belied and denied you. They forced you to depart from Mecca. Behead them." The Companions could not agree as to whose opinion Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) wouki follow. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) remained silent. He entered his house and soon came out again and said:

Allah cause the hearts of some people to become soft, softer than milk. And Allah causes the hearts of some people to become hard, even harder than stone. Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), your example is like that of Ibraheem (Alayhis Salaam) who said:

فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِىْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّىْ وَمَنْ عَصَانِىْ فَاِنَّكَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ

“0 Allah, whosoever follows me, is of me and whosoever disobeyes me, verily You are Forgiving, Merciful.”

And 0 Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) your example is like Nabi ‘Esa (Alayhis Salaam), who said:

اِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَاِنْ تَغْفِرْلَهُمْ فَاِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ

“0 Lord, if You punish them, (You have the right) for they are Your servants, and if You forgive them (You have the right) for You are the Mighty, the Wise.”

And 0 Umar (Radiallahu anhu) your example is like that of Nabi Nooh (Alayhis Salaam) who said:

رَبِّ لَاتَذَرْ عَلَى الْاَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِيْنَ دَيَّارًا

“0 Lord leave not one of the disbelievers in the land for if you leave them, they will mislead others... (71.26-27) And your example is like that of Nabi Musa (Alayhis Salaam) who said:

رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلٰى اَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَلَايُؤْمِنُوْا حَتّٰى
يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْاَلِيْمَ

“0 Lord, destroy their wealth and harden their hearts so that they believe not, (increasing in disbelief), until they see the painful chastisement. “(X 89) (Tirmidhi)

Similarly there were other differences between these two Shaikhs. They disagreed regarding the waging of war against those who refused to pay Zakaat. Thereafter they disagreed regarding the taking of the wealth of these people as war booty and about enslaving their wives and children. They disagreed on despatching Usaamah’s (Radiallahu anhu) army and about the dismissal of Khalid bin Waleed (Radiallahu anhu) from the leadership of the army. In the end in spite of the insistance of Umar (Radiallahu anhu), Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) refused to remove Khalid (Radiallahu anhu). The moment Umar (Radiallahu anhu) became Calipha, he had Khalid (Radiallahu anhu) replaced and sacked him. There was differences regarding the compilation of the Quran, the legacy due to a grandfather and regarding the thief convicted of theft for the third time. Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) ordered the left hand to be cut off, whereas Umar (Radiallahu anhu) during his Caliphate refused to do so. According to Abu Baicr (Radiallahu anhu) the sale of a slave-woman who had borne a child to her master was permissible. Umar (Radiallahu anhu) considered it not permissible. There were many points of Islamic Law and policy where these two eminent sons of Islam disagreed. If we want to note them all, we require much more space than this letter.

Differences between the Sahabah (Radiallahu anlium)

In similar fashion there are many other noteworthy and well-known differences among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). Abu Jaafar Mansur (Radiallahu anhu) ordered Imam Malik (Radiallahu anhu) to write a book which would be free from “the seventies of Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and the lenience of Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu).” (See introd. to Owjaz). This further indicates that there were further differences between these two just like between the two Shaikhs.

We know then that there were many points of difference on masaail among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). Anyone who had read and studied Sahih Tirmidhi will know. They disagreed regarding the one convicted of sodomy. You will know that according to Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) he should be burnt to death. Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) says he should be cast headlong from the highest building of the habitation. According to many other Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) he should be killed.

According to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) touching of the private parts breaks the wudu, but according to Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu), Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu), it does not. According to the vast majority of Sahabab (Radiallahu anhum), it is permissible to make wudu with sea water. Ibn Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says it is makrooh. According to the vast majority of Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) it is commendable and mustahab to use perfume on Fridays. Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) says it is Waajib (compulsory). Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says that wailing and lamenting over a deceased one, brings punishment on the deceased. Sayyida Ayha (Radiallahu anha) denies this most vehemently.

Imam Zuhri (Radiallahu anhu) reports that there was a difference between Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) and Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) regarding whether Fasts not kept in Ramadan should afterwards be kept continuously or whether it may be done intermittently. Then also it was the viewpoint of a large group of Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) that wudu is nullified after eating food cooked by fire. Among the holders of this view is Sayyidina Anas (Radiallahu anhu), Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu), Ibn Umar (Radiallahu anhu), Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha) and others. However the view of the four Caliphs as well as the vast majority of Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) is that in such cases wudu does not break. Sayyiclina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) believes that in tayanlmum it is necessary to wipe dust-covered hands right up to the elbows. Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) says up to the wrists is enough.

It is the belief of Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and Anas (Radiallahu anhu) that if a donkey passes in front of a person in Salaah, the Salaah becomes nullified. Against this Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu), Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and others say that Salaah does not break.

If there are only two persons together with the Imam in Salaah, then according to the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) the Imam should stand ahead of his two-man congregation. Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) says that the Imam

should stand in-between the two and in line with them. It is interesting to note that even between Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and his son Abdullah (Radiallanu anhu) there were many differences in masaail. Someone once asked Hasan-al-Basri (Radiallahu anhu): “How is it that Sayyidina Tbn Umar (Radiallahu anhu) used to peform Witr Salaah in such manner that he recited the salaam in-between.” (In other words he first performed two rakaahs independently and then added one independently). Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) replied: “Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) (his father) used to perform the three rakaahs together, and he had greater insight into fiqah (jurisprudence) than Ibn Umar (Radiallahu anhu) .“ (Hashiya of Bukhari).

Differences of the Four Imams (Rahinatullah Alayh)

So we see that there are numerous masaail in which the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) and the Tabi-een disagreed. Thereafter we have the difference in the mazhabs of the four Imams which have existed for twelve- hundred years. Each of these Imams have millions of followers acting upon their mazhabs. Once, I set about counting the differences of opinion between the Ulema in four rakaahs Salaah. A short-sighted person like myself came across one hundred and fifty. How many more may not be uncovered by more capable ones?

Look at this one. On Fridays there is one moment when any dua that is made at that time is accepted and granted by Allah. Which is that moment? The differences of the Ulema in fixing that specific moment is such that there are up to fifty theories. (Owjaz). Even as to when Laylatul-Qadr will be there are almost fifty theories. The Quran exhorts us to observe Salaah diligently and especially the middle Salaah. Which is the middle Salaah? In answer to this there are among the Ulema twenty-two theories and statements. Apart from these there are quite a few others where the differences are of such nature that there are numerous theories. And so it has been for ages. Now I ask you: Is this all mischief and evil? Did the Ummat land into calamities because of this or do we have to admit that for the Ummat there was ease and comfort therein? We have already stated that those who appreciated these differences, had said so. You have seen how Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Radiallahu anhu) was pleased with it.

When the Abbasid Calipha Abu Jaa’far Al-Mansur (Radiallahu anhu) went on Haj to Mecca, he met Imam Malik (Rahmatullah Alayh) and requested him to have numerous copies made of his books. The Caliph: expressed his desire to have these copies spread all over his dominion, and to command that all should act accordingly and not exceed beyond it. The Imam refused to accede to the request of the king, saying: “Many different Hadeeth have reached the people of various areas and every group of pupils is acting in accordance with the reports they have received. Hence they should be left to act according to their own mazhab.”

Later the Abbasid Caliph Haroon-al-Rashid (Rahmatullah Alayh) also discussed a similar matter with the Imam saying: “It is my wish that a copy of the Muatta-i-Maalik should be placed inside the Kaaba, and to declare it compulsory that all

should act according to it." This too Imam Maalik (Rahmatullah Alayh) refused saying: "There has been diffefences of opinion among the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) on certain sub-divisional (faraih) affairs. And they are correct in their juristic (ijtihaad) interpretations. Now these masaail have become widespread and people are acting according to those masaail. (Do not now stop or confuse them)."

Haroon-al-Rashid (Rahmatullah Alayh) appreciated this answer very much. (Introd. of Owjaz).

The differences between the Hanafis and the Shafis are well-known. In hundreds of masaail they hold different views. Yet this very same Imam Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh) said: "Whosoever wishes to become a proper jurist, should attach himself to one of the students of Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh). I myself became a jurist through the books of Imam Abu Muhammad (Rahmatullah Alayh) (disciple of Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh)."

Imam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh) said to his disciples: "Wherever you happen to find any proof contrary to my stated verdict, then accept it." On this the author of Duff Manthoor writes: "The basis of this saying of the Imam is the fact that the differences of opinion among the Ulema is a sign of mercy and that on condition that this dissent is in accordance with the rules and is governed by principles, the more the dissent the greater the mercy." (Shami).

These respected ones never had much worries about differences among themselves. Now I ask you. Look at those things wherein the Ulema have no differences. Then tell me: What is happening to those things about which there are no differences of opinion? Salaah, the beard, wine, interest and others. Is there any difference of opinion regarding the compulsion of Salaah? Look what is being done to it, and all these others. The treatment given to all these is only too evident and you see the result.

Causes for the Continuation of Controversies

Cause One: Now I ask you to take careful note of what I say. In my humble opinion there are two causes for these ever-increasing controversies of today. One pertains to the Ulema and the other concerns the masses. The fault of the Ulema is this that they do not keep their differences in non-principle matters confined to the Ulema. No, in fact many of them go out of their way to solicit and canvas the support of the masses and to have them on their sides in their battles. They thereby, with the help and support of the masses, endeavour to insult and degrade the Ulema of truth. In truth, for them the best line of action should be this: They should express their views and findings fearlessly and without fear announce that which they consider the truth. In that, they should also not be afraid of the blame thrown at them by critics and also not take notice as to whether anyone acts according to these findings or not.

Remember that as for those who are the people of truth, their truthfulness is not affected by whether people are following them or not. So if none acts according to

one's view, what difference does it make? There were some Prophets of Allah who had only one single follower (Mishkat). Does that necessarily mean that any flaw was made in the dignity of this Nabi?

Look at the Sahabi Sayyidina Abu Zarr (Radiallahu anhu). His verdict was that it is absolutely not permissible to accumulate wealth. This was contrary to the verdict of the vast majority of Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). He set about expounding his view in every gathering he attended and did not care whether anyone accepted his view or not.

It is of particular importance to take care that in those circumstances where the ordinary man in the Street is not able to understand the differences of opinion of the Ulema, the Ulema should refrain from expressing their differences publicly. In such matters these differences should be expressed in circles of the learned. However if there is fear of being accused of being guilty, of hiding knowledge, or if for the sake of conveying the message, if in such cases those matters have to be expressed, then do so by all means! But this thing - that before the masses are able to understand the issues properly to pressurjse them into becoming loyal supporters of your fatwa, this is folly!

These Ulema should understand this that when other seekers after truth among the Ulema disagree with you, it means that there is scope for the masses to act on both opposing views. Not this that we see so commonly today: that you stir up the masses against your opponent. The result inevitably is that the followers of your opponent become instigated against you. So you can imagine what all this leads to.

As for us, we have before ourselves the high and noble example of our elders, our predecessors: Look at this!

It was the general practice of the Sahabah (Radialiahu anhum) to perform three rakaahs for Witr Salaah. However Sayyidina Muawiya (Radiallahu anhu) only performed one. This was seen by Kurayb, a freed slave of Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anflu), who reported the matter to Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu). Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Do not object against him for he is himself an eminent jurist." (Bukhari).

On a journey it was the general practice of Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) and almost all the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) to perform only two rakaahs (instead of four) in Fard Salaah. Someone told him that at Mina, Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) performed four rakaahs, (while being still a musafir on a journey). Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) said: "Innaliliahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon. Verily with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) I performed only two rakaahs at Mina, and also with Abu Bakr (Radiaflahu anhu) and with Umar (Radjallahu anhu).

According to another report Ibn Masood (Radiallahu anhu) also performed only two rakaahs with Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) in the early stages of his Caliphate. (Bukhari).

But in spite of all this it is reported in Sahih of Abu Dawood that Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) still performed four rakaahs with Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu). Someone told him: "But how is it that you once objected to Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) performing four rakaahs (at Mina) and now you still go ahead and perform four (instead of two)." He replied "Opposing someone is a severe thing."

The reason for his giving this reply is clear: Abdullah bin Masood (Radhiallahu anhu) considered Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) a musafir i.e. traveller (who should really only perform two rakaahs). However he had made the intention of becoming a resident (muqeem) and thus made four. Now this Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) is a mujtahid and so is Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu). Abdullah (Radiallahu anhu) did not consider that the verdict and findings of his research should be compulsory for another mujtahid to act upon.

Someone asked Sayyidina Umar: "Will you appoint someone to be your successor as Calipha?"

He replied: "If I do not appoint my successor, I will have a legal right not to do so because Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) did not (through command of revealed texts) do so. And if I do appoint my successor, I will also have a legal right to do so because Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) appointed me."

According to the view of Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), after the struggle against those who refused to give Zakaat, the wealth of those refusers of Zakaat was considered as booty and their wives and children in the order of slaves. Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) disagreed with this verdict.
During the Caliphate of Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) this was the fatwa and it was accepted by Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and the other Sahabah (Radialiahu anhum). However, during the Caliphate of Umar (Radiallahu anhu), Umar (Radiallahu anhu's) fatwa was accpeted and acted upon. (Fat-uI-bari).

It is a fact that according to Iman Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh), the recitation of the Dua-e-Qunoot in Fajr Salaah is Sunnat. Once he visited the grave of Imam Abu Haneefah and had to perform Fair Salaah there.

In the Salaah he purposely did not recite the Qunoot (and according to other reports. did not recite BISMILLAH loudly, which is also a Sunnat according to him). When asked about this, he replied: ''The respect for the inmate of this grave prevented me."

Some people raise objections against this story saying: "How is it that acting according to the Sunnat can be discarded because of respect for any man?" The

esteem and rank of Imam Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh) as a godfearing scholar is too high that we can say he purposely neglected or omitted the Sun- nat because of another person, even a mujtahid!

This matter needs to be properly understood. Imam Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh) did not actually discard the Sunnah out of respect for Imam Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh). What he did do in fact was to consider at that moment, the research of Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh) superior to his own. For according to the research findings of Abu Haneefah (Rahmatullah Alayh), these things are not Sunnat. According to him the Sunnat is not to recite Qunoot in Fajr and not to recite BISMILLAH loudly. What harm is there if a mujtahid, himself considers somethings to be Sunnat and then acts upon the findings of another research scholar of eminence and repute?
The eminent Shafi lawyers acknowledge this incident. Hence Ibn Hajar Makkj (Radiallajiu anhu), in spite of being among the foremost research Shafi lawyers writes: "Some people doubt the truth of this incident. In fact there is no need for doubt or for objections against it. Sometimes some such things come in conflict with the Sunnat, which are of more importance, For example the respect and honour of the Ulema. This is a compulsory thing at all times, especially in front of the envious ones and those filled with jealousy (against the Ulema). The obligatoriness of this is unanimously agreed upon, whereas the issue of the Qunoot and the recitation of BISMILLAH loudly or sofity is a controversial one, on which there are various points of view. The showing of respect to the Ulema was of a special importance in the case of Imam Abu Haneefa (Rahmatulla Alayh) because he had many enemies, who made many untrue allegations against him, they put an end to his life. Hence in a case such as this it was most necessary to express respect and honour for him..," (Introd. to Owjaz).

Differences between our own elders

Among my elders and superiors there have always been disagreement in some matters. But never ever did anyone try to force his views down the throat of others. In this way there were differences of opinion between my Shaikh Maulana KhaliI Ahmed and my late father on many issues. My Shaikh, the Maulana often used to say to some people: "In my opinion such-and-such an act is not permissible, but according to Molvi Yahya Saheb it is permissible. If you so wish you may go upstairs to him and ask him and act according to his fatwa." Such an incident happened to me also.

Once at the end of Ramadaan there was uncertainty resulting from the uncertainty of the sighting of the moon for Shabaan. A discussion was held with the Shaikh that seeing that the sky was clear on that day, and having completed 30 days' fast by that evening, should the moon not be sighted, will it be necessary to fast the next day or not? Hazrat stated that the evidence on which the sighting of the moon for Shabaan depended, was not legally acceptable and as a result the next day should be fasted. My humble opinion was that the evidence was legally acceptable and correct and as

such there should be no fast the next day. For the whole day the discussion continued. That evening the new moon was not sighted. Hazrat then declared that he would fast the next day. When 1 inquired about what his instruction was for me, he said: "It is not necessary for you to follow my example. If you find my view acceptable, you can fast. Otherwise you are free to follow your own view."

The end of the story was that Hazrat fasted. I did not. Among his followers and mureeds many fasted and many did not. Never once did he ask any of them: "Why did you not fast?"

Up till today I feel this shame and sorrow in myself that I had the audacity at- that time to prefer my own understanding of a matter above that of his. Be it to his credit that not once directly or indirectly did he say anything that bears a hint of reproach. In fact he actually commanded to me.

Why these controversies continue

Cause Two: The second reason for the continuation of these controversies is closely connected with the reason discussed above, but is a more severe cause of controversy. It is this that the masses among the Muslims have made it an unnecessary habit of passing judgement on religious affairs, considering it to be their right. What need is there for them to put themselves in judgement uef inen of knowledge when there is disagreement? What right have they when they are devoid of the ability to understand the academic discussions and arguments of the Ulema? Is it not foolish that still they persist in becoming judges between the Ulema and passing judgement on their finding! What these common people should really do is to follow the guidance of the true Ulema in whom they have confidence, and who by experience they know to be Allah-fearing, pious, experienced and saintly.

This would surely have happened if the object of these people was to find the truth, so as to follow and do acts of righteousness as a Muslim should. But here we find the object is only to create controversy. They will find no enjoyment in those meetings where abuse and condemnation is not uttered against opponents. They will not enjoy being part of those gatherings where opponents are not denounced and reputation not destroyed. Those functions in which straight-forward religious talks are given, are considered exceedingly boring and lifeless. Such a speech is definitely not a sermon. That speaker has not mastered th art of oratory. In their view the good orator is he who can make minced meat of his opponents. They should realize that one of those things against which the Quran and Hadeeth most seriously spoke is the farming of mutual quarrelling. Says the Quran:

وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ

"And dispute not with one another lest ye falter and your strength depart from you.,, (8. 46)

Bukhari relates an incident. Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) says: "Once I heard a man recite a verse in a manner other than that which I had heard from

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). I took hold of him and brought him to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who said: “You both have recited correctly. Do not quarrel among yourselves. People before you quarreled and were destroyed.”

It should be noted that here there definitely was a difference in recitation between these two. Yet Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said both were correct. In other words he kept the difference intact and forbade any dispute because such disputes and quarrels are the cause of destruction. So the differences of opinion referred to here which were prohibited are those which appear as quarrels.

A similar incident happened to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallanu anhu). He says:
I heard Hisham recite surah Furqan (in Salaah). He recited it in a different manner from that which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) taught me. I wanted to grab him in the Salaah and bring him to the presence of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). However I bore it with patience until he completed the Salaah. Then I grabbed his cloak from his neck and asked: “Who taught you to recite this surah in this manner?” He said:”Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).” I replied: “That is untrue.”

Then like that I dragged him to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and I asked:

“This man recites the Quran differently from what you taught me.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) listened to the recitation of both of us and declared both to be correct. (Durr Manthoor from Muslim Bukhari). In this way there are many other cases in Hadeeth where Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in spite of mutual differences, declared both sides to be correct.

However this does not mean that when one comes across anything said by anyone against one’s research findings, it should not be made public. If one is a man of knowledge, competence and research, one should express it in a suitable manner.

Such an incident happened to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself in connection with this same surah Furqan. Once in Fajr Salaah Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) recited this surah and accidentally left out one verse. After the Salaah he inquired whether Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka’ab (Radiallahu anhu) well-known Qari of the Quran was present. Ubay (Radiallahu anhu) said: “I am present.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: “Why did you not remind me?” Ubay (Radiallahu anhu) replied: “I thought that this verse had been abrogated.”
(Dun Manthoor)

The other incidents are mentioned in Abu Dawood. Now when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself asked to be reminded, what is wrong if others are reminded and put right. You will notice that the Shariat has declared it the best form of Jihad to speak the truth in the presence of an unjust ruler. And also declared as a general principle:

لَاطَاعَةَ لِمَخْلُوْقٍ فِى مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ

"Let there be no obedience to any man in that which is sin against the Creator."

It is however important that the aim and object of admonishing others shall be to call towards obedience to Allah and to express the truth - not the glorification of one's own party and its defence. This is prejudice and fanaticism.

In differences of opinion there is no harm. If these differences are within Shariat rules, it is to be praised. But to make differences of opinion the basis for disputes and quarrels, and to sow confusion in Muslim ranks and to cause enmity and the breaking up of Muslim unity is a deplorable act. There is a vast difference between the two. We have taken this thing which is in itself a good thing and have made it into a calamity upon ourselves.

Imam Hasan-al-Basri (Radiallahu anhu) is an eminent Tabi-ee, a great Aiim, scholar and one of the greats among the sufis. Sometimes in his great enthusiasm he expressed such thoughts on the doctrine of fate and predestination, which were against the views of the vast majority of Ulema. This caused a great uproar in the circles of his opponents and many false things were attributed to him. Ayoob says: "Two types of people made false accusations against Hasan (Radiallahu anhu). One group was those who belonged to the Qadiriya sect (believers in free will) who wanted to give a boost to their views and wanted to show Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) as being in agreement with their sectarian views. The second type was those who bore personal malice against him and they publicised his statements." (Abu-Dawood)

This is exactly what is happening to us today. Whenever any party wants to publicise and spread its views, they attribute those views to the respected leader of the party. As for those who are opposed to him, they go out of their way to spread his words, in and out of context and falsely, attributing to him what he did not say. Hereby the gulf of dispute and opposition becomes widened. Again I say that the correct action is to follow the declarations of that Alim in whom they have confidence, who is a practical true Muslim and a man of knowledge and research. Unfortunately, so are we that we claim love and faith in the leader, but act not accordingly.

The sum total of our love and support of our elders is that we shower abuse on those considered to be the leaders of others, the enemy. The Word of Allah, which is the basis of the faith of Muslims, is quite severe as in this regard it instructs:

وَلَاتَسُبُّوا الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

"Abuse not those who unto whom they pray, besides Allah lest they wrongfully abuse Allah through ignorance." (6.108)

Look here the Quran even forbids us to abuse the idols of the idol- worshippers! But when we look at the adherents to the Quran, we find that not one political function, gathering or procession is free from the shouting of slogans against opponents and slogans for the destruction and ruin of the elders and leaders of opposing parties. We find today that instead of striving for the building up of itself and strengthening its

forces and working out its schemes, every party tries to work for the downfall of others, to swear them into the earth and to wish them dead.

It is so funny that every party wished the other dead and yet they cry and complain that the Muslims are heading for destruction.

WARNING

From this that has been written above, you will have to come to know that not every form of difference of opinion is denounced. Many forms of differences are praiseworthy. However many types of dissent are certainly deplorable and detestable. Thus it shows a lack of knowledge about Islamic principles to regard all the differences of the Ulema as being the cause of disruption and confusion. If there is any cause for disruption here, it is the use of the laudable differences of the Ulema for the creation of disputes and quarrels whether these disputes arise among the Ulema or the common people as we see today.

However, tne reality ot praiseworthy dissent is based upon knowledge of the rules of Shariat.

This is also a fallacy that every person may come along with a difference of opinion, whenever he likes and it should be considered as laudable. Everything that has been explicitly proven from the Shariat does not allow any deduction and to disagree therewith is grave error. The Quran warns against this:

وَلَاتَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَاجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ

"And be not of those who separated and dissented after clear proof had come to them." (3. 105)

Saeed bin Musayyib (Radiallahu anhu) once saw a person performing nafi Salaah after Asar prayers. After the prayers the man told Ibn Musayyib (Radiallahu anhu) : "Do you think Allah will punish me for having performed Salaah?"
Ibn Musayyib (Radiallahu anhu) answered "No, he will not punish you for performing Salaah. But He will indeed punish you for having adopted a way contrary to that of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)." (Darmy)

The contention of this man was that Salaah is a most virtuous deed and the best form Ibaadah. What can be undesirable or impermissible about it? But because Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had declared nail Salaah after Asar not permissible, Ibn Musayyib (Radiallahu anhu) said that although Salaah is the best form of Ibaadah, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had prohibited nafi after Asar Salaah.

Sayyidina Ubaadah bin Saamit (Radiallahu anhu) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) prohibited the taking of two dirhams in return for having given one dirham. A man who was present there said: "In my opinion there does not seem to be any harm in that." Ubaadah (Radiallahu anhu) replied: "I am telling you that

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) prohibited it and you say there is no harm in it. By Allah, I swear, never shall I ever join you in this house again." (Darmy)

All the Ulema, jurists and Ulema of Hadeeth - whether of the early era of Islam or the later decades - all have unanimously agreed that the denial of belief in anything which has been proven conclusively and categorically as being part of the deen, is kufr.

It has been stated by Qazi Ayas in Shifa and by Mulla Au Qari in the commentary on Shifa that there is complete consensus and agreement among all Muslim Ulema that such a person becomes a kaafir who believes it is permissible to kill a Muslim or to commit adultery or to drink wine or to deny any such thing which has been categorically proven to have been continuously and successively part of the deen throughout the ages. However if the person is a new convert to Islam and has not yet come to know the teachings of Islam, he will be excused.
Shah Walliyullah (Rahmatullah Alayh) has written in Iza-latul-Khifa that there are three cases when it is permissible to revolt against a king. Among them, one case is when the king by denying any of the essentials of deen, becomes kaafir. In such a case it is compulsory to rebel agianst him. This is the most excellent type of Jihad. Similarly it is a grave error and one is considered to have gone astray if he dissents in anything which is beyond all differences of opinion. In Sharh Mawaahil Allama Zurqani (Rahmatullah Alayh) write: "The differences of opinion of this Ummat in those matters that allow scope for ijtihad (reasoning and conclusion by analogy) is a mercy -a great mercy- and latitude for Ummat and all the various verdicts arrived at will be such as if there are different Shariahs - all of which were brought by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Hence the conclusion drawn by the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) and the Ulema after them for the deeds and words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) are all like different Shariahs. This too forms part of the miracles of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). However to introduce ijtihad into beliefs is a major error and deviation from truth. Truth is only that on which the Ahlis Sunnah wal Jamaat base their belief."
By the dissent that is praised in the Hadeeth is meant only the dissent in lesser, non-principle, sub-sectional affairs - (Furoo-i). And the division that is prohibited means division in matters of principle (Usooli).

Allama Subki (Rahmatullah Alayh) says that there is not the slightest doubt therein that to differ in major ahkaam is error and deviation. This kind of dissent is a cause for all corruption.

Here is an example. Take the question of FATE (Taqdeer). This is one of the principle, major masaail. The Shariat even forbids any discussion on it. Such dire and grave warnings have been given in the Hadeeth against creating any dissent therein that we must seek refuge in Allah from such error. Rasulullah (Sailallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The Qadiriya sect -(those who deny the doctrine of FATE (predestination) are the magians (majoos) of this Ummat. If they fall ill, do not visit them and if they die, do not join in their funeral prayers." (Abu Dawood).

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The magians of this Ummat are those people who deny the doctrine of FATE. Whosoever of them should die, do not join in their funeral prayers, and whosoever of them should fall ill, do not visit them to inquire of their health. These are of the congregation of Dajjal (the Anti-Christ). Allah will join them with the party of Dajjal."

Yahya bin Ya'mar (Radiallahu anhu) says: "Humaid and myself went for the Holy Pilgrimage or Umrah. We desired to meet any of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) of Rasulullah (Saliallahu Alayhi Wasallam) to ask about the Qadiriya sect. By chance we happened to meet Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) I said to him: 'In our locality a new group have arisen who do much research into matters of knowledge. They recite the Quran but deny the doctrine of fate (predestination)'."

Sayyidina Ibn Umar (Rafjiallahu anhu) said: "Tell those people that I am free of them and they are free of me.'' (Abu Dawood)

Apart from these there are many other Ahaadeeth reported about those people.

Abu Bakr Farsi (Rahmatullah Alayh) recorded in his book - Kitbul-Ijma that whosoever makes any false accusation against Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is, by the general consensus of all the Ulema, a kaafir. (Fat-hul-bari).

It is reported in Bukhari that a party of atheists (zindeeq) were brought into the presence of Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu). Au (Radiallahu anhu) had them burnt to death. Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) heard of this and said: "I would not have had then burnt. I would have beheaded them." All these above mentioned cases concern differing on principles. Hence the dire consequences.

Discussion on the mutashabihaat verses of the Quran is prohibited. These are those ambiguous and extremely difficult verses about which we are unsure as to their correct meaning, the true knowledge of which is only with Allah. Sabeegh bin Asl Iraqi (Radiallahu anhu), a resident of Basra was very fond of discussing these mutashabihaat. When he visited Egypt he also started discussing these verses with the Muslims there. The governor of Egypt, Amr bin-al-Aas, wrote a letter to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) reporting the matter to him. Umar (Radiallahu anhu) replied by writing a letter wherein he asked that Sabeegh (Radiallahu anhu) be sent to him immediately. When he came to Madina, Umar (Radiallahu anhu) asked him: "Who are you?"
He replied: "I am Allah's servant, Sabeegh."
Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: "And I am Allah's servant, Umar."

Then Umar (Radiallahu anhu) began to strike him with canes using fresh ones one after another, until his whole body was smeared with blood. Then he left him. As soon as his wounds started to heal, he again started to thrash him until he was again covered in blood. Then Sabeegh (Radiallahu anhu) cried out: "Umar, if you had decided to kill me, please do so with ease. And if your aim is to cure me of the illness

which is in my head, then I tell you it has been removed from me." Then Umar (Radiallahu anhu) released him and allowed him to return to his home in Basra. However he also ordered that no one should associate with him.

Abu Uthman Nahdi says: "After the order of Umar (Radiallahu anhu) reached us, even if a hundred of us were gathered in one place and Sabeegh (Radiallahu anhu) arrived there, we all immediately dispersed. This proved to be very hard for Sabeegh (Radiallahu anhu). Thereafter Sayyidina Abu Musa Al-Ashary (Radiallahu anhu) wrote a letter to Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu), saying that Sabeegh (Radiallahu anhu) had now reformed his ways and improved and that those previous ideas had been discarded." Then only Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) gave the people permission to associate with him. (Durr Manthoor)

There are so many other incidents like this from which it becomes quite clear that the limits of dissent in the Shariat are fixed. It is not so that a person with zeal for investigation and research may write or say whatever he likes or poke fun at the ordinances of the Shariat or to ridicule the Sunnah of Allah's most beloved Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), or to try and make a laughing stock out of some of the most important commands. What injustice is this that one may have good a pen in one's hand and be devoid of any knowledge and still to set about when something is not understood, to declare it wrong and exclude it from Islam? And to have the audacity to call it the dissent of the Ulema!

The commandments of the Shariat are in various degrees of importance. Some are very important. No man has the right to demote any commandment from its higher rank of importance to any lower degree. Some again are of lower grade of importance and none has the right to promote them in rank above its given rank. The ability to distinguish between the ranks of commandments, as to which is the degree of importance it holds, depends upon knowledge of Shariat.
It also depends upon proper comprehension of the rules of deducing commandments from the Quran and Hadeeth. This again requires depth of knowledge and understanding, i.e. three branches of knowledge, viz, principles of Fiqah (Usoole Fiqah), principles of Hadeeth (Usoole Hadeeth) of principles of Tafseer (Usoole Tafseer).

The jurists of Islam have agreed that for a person to reach the stage where he acquires the right of Ijtihad, it is necessary for him to have sound knowledge of the Book of Allah, sound insight into lexical meanings, proper insight and understanding of all legal and technical meanings. Then also he must have knowledge of the modes of reasoning i.e. general, particular common (mushtarak), the interpreted (mu'owwal), outward meanings (zaahir), expounded meanings (mufassar), firm meanings (muh-kam) the hidden meanings (khafee), the complicated (mush-kil) the condensed (mujmal), analogous meanings (mutashaabih), clear meanings (sareeh).

Then also there must be the knowledge of the manner in which the commands are conveyed in the verses viz. IBARATUN NASS, by clear wording of the text,

ISHARATUN NASS, by a hint in the wording of the text, DALALATUN NASS, by direct indication of the text, and IQTIDA-UNNASS, by passive requirement of the text. Then also there must be the knowledge of the sources, derivations, arrangements of words and their technical meanings in law. A sound knowledge is also required in the order of verses as to the weight of the commands contained therein. Hence one must know which things are categorical (Qat'ee) and which are less so (Thannee). Further a knowledge is also required in the grades of commands and prohibitions. All these must also be known for Hadeeth.

When it comes to Hadeeth the condition of its soundness of authenticity, the mutual comparative degrees of authenticity between Hadeeth and the particulars regarding the characters of the narrators etc. must be known. In short all the principles and rules required for juridical reasoning towards the ascertainment of the Shariat commands are required and are indispensable.

And it is an open truth that only those skilled in any art are able to talk about it with any sort of authority. If a person who is a skilled engineer, and who had attained a high degree of proficiency therein should now consider himself capable of giving opinions in medical matters and now wishes to practice medicine, you can be sure that the lives of patients will be endangered. So how can everyone be an expert in religious sciences? There are many Hadeeth to the effect that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said that if no more Ulema shall remain, the ignorant ones will be made leaders, who, without knowledge will proceed to issue fatwas. Thereby not only will they themselves be in error but will also lead others astray. Hence to give opinions in theological matters, knowledge of theology is needed. Without knowledge and by merely applying reason, no problems are solved and no correct conclusions reached.

By way of example, I now give two examples. The jurists have stated: Say a person bought an animal for the purpose of sacrifice (Qurbani). The animal then gets lost. He then buys another animal for the same purpose. Then he happens to find his first animal. What must he do? The Ulema says that if this person is a poor man on whom Qurbani is not compulsory, he should slaughter both animals. But if he is a rich man only one animal has to be slaughtered. He may slaughter whichever of the two animals he chooses. The other animal may be sold or he is free to do with it as he pleases. The ma'sala is quite clear, but is based on certain principles and knowledge of those principles. Mere intellectual reasoning does not suffice.

Here is another mas'ala mentioned by Allama Shanii. A man performs Salaah and forgets to make ruku. He then only remembers it after having completed his Salaah. What should he do?

The answer is that if he had performed his Salaah according to the Sunnat way like the godfearing pious ones, the Salaah is corrupted and void. He must perform that Salaah all over again. If however he had performed the Salaah not according to the

Sunnah, like ignorant people as many people do today, the Salaah is considered to have been performed correctly and adequately.

What acceptable opinions can be voiced by so-called enlightened brains, polished oratory and fluent writers in mas'aail such as these? For such a reason Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said that if this Deen had been based on logically reasoned opinion only, it would have been the ma'sala that instead of drawing wet hands over the upper part of the (khut) leather socks, the wet hands would have been drawn over the bottom of the socks. "But I have seen Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) draw his hands over the upper part of the socks."

It is a fact that as long as a person does not have the ability to ascertain the limits and scope of acting upon the prescriptions and prohibitions of the Quran and Hadeeth, and as long as he is not able to gather all the relevant verses and Hadeeth (on any specific topic) and then to give preference to some (unders special rules) how will he be able to draw the proper conclusions?

Shah Walliyullah (Rahmatullah Alayh) wrote in Izalatul-khifa: "For a mujtahid five types of knowledge are required. The man who is not properly conversant with all types of knowledge can never be a mujtahid. Firstly, knowledge of the recitation of the Quran and its tafseer. Secondly, knowledge of Hadeeth together with the chains of reporters thereof as well as knowledge of authenticity and weakness. Thirdly, knowledge of the explanatory statements of the pious predecessors so that one does not go beyond their consensus as well as the various diverse statements of those elders. Fourthly, knowledge of the Arabic language, etymology and grammar etc. Fifthly, the manner of deducing ma'saail, knowledge of the various types of texts, reconciliation between seemingly rival or contrary verses or Hadeeth as well as the regulations for giving preference."

Contradictory Iladeeth and Reconciliation (Izala)

Allama Haazimi, writing in his book Kitabul-eetibaar fee bayaanil naasilchi wal mansookh minal aathaar has given fifty different criteria whereby one Hadeeth may be preferred to another in cases where is seems two Hadeeth are contrary or opposite in meaning one to the other. He mentioned them all serially and at length.

Allama Suyuti, states in his book Tadreebul-Raawi that Hafiz Iraqi had given more than one hundred possible reasons for giving preference to one Hadeeth over another. Apart from this there is also some difference of opinion as regards those reasons for preference. According to some reasons a certain Hadeeth will be given preference and according to others another Hadeeth will enjoy preference. Then there is the case where two Hadeeth have contents which are in direct opposition and contrary to one another. Now if two criteria of preference are opposed to each other, which criterion should be given first place? This in itself is a separate issue.

By way of example let us look at two incidents of Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) . There was a dispute between a Muslim and a non- Muslim. The case was heard by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and he gave judgement in favour of the non-Muslim. The Muslim thought that being a Muslim, Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) would surely take this into consideration and possibly show him some manner of favour. He requested that his case be heard by Umar (Radiallahu anhu). The non-Muslim said: "Rasulullah (Sallallahu A.layhi Wasallam) had given judgement in my favour. But this man does not accept the decision. He requested that the case be heard by you."

Umar (Radiallahu anhu) asked the Muslim: "Is this true what he says?" The Muslim replied: "Yes it is true."

Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) without saying another word, went inside and fetched a sword. With it he beheaded the Muslim saying: "This is judgement for him who is not satisfied with the decision of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)." (Durr Manthoor)

Now listen to another incident about this same Umar (Radiallahu anhu). The story is quite lengthy. Briefly, this is it: Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasal lam) once gave his shoes to Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) as a token, saying: "Go fetch whomsoever you chance to meet, who with hart and soul declares: LA—ILAHA ILLILLAH, give unto him the good news that he shall enter paradise."

Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) went out and the first person he met was Umar (Radiallahu anhu). Umar (Racljallahu anhu) asked: "How is it that these shoes are carried around by you." Thereupon Abu Hurayrab (Radiallahu anhu) gave the good news from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Umar (Radiallahu anhu) struck him so hard against his breast with both hands that he fell down flat. He then told him to go back. Abu Hurayrah (Radiallahu anhu) came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallarn) and weeping loudly, told Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) what had happened. Umar (Radiallahu anhu) also appeared immediately after him.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: "Why did you do this?"

Umar (Radiallahu anhu) replied: "0 Messenger of Allah, do not do this because people will rely on these glad tidings, sit contented and neglect good works." (Mishkat).

Now I ask you. Does this mean (Allah forbid) that Umar (Radiallahu anhu) disregarded the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)? Or that he stood up to oppose the statement ohhe Rasul(Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) or acted contrary to it?

In order to correlate this incident with the previous one, it requires depth of knowledge. Look at yet another incident: It was the battle of Badr and Rasulullah

(Sallallahu Alayhi Wasailam) was marching towards the battlefield. A man well-known for his skill in battle and courage came along with the intention of participating. When the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) saw him they were pleased.
Rasulullah (Sallaflahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked him: "Have you embraced the faith?"
He replied: "No".
Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "I do not accept help from a polytheist."

That happened but it is also reported that later Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) sought financial and other help from a polytheist -Safwan bin Urnmayya in the battles of Khaybar and Hunayn. Now which of these Hadeeth enjoy preference and why? (Kitabul Eetibaar) What is more, at Badr the Muslims in their weakness and being few in number were much more in need of help than at the battles of Khaybar and Hunayn.

Once in the 8th year Hijri Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was going somewhere when one of the Sahabah (RadiallahU anhum) while fasting, was being cupped (to draw blood). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "The fast of him who cups and him who is being cupped is nullified." But during the 10th year of the Hijri Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had himself cupped while fasting."

Then there is also a saying of his that the payment received for cupping is unholy, but at the same time we also have it on record that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself paid the man who cupped him. How is the one Hadeeth given preference over another?

There is a Hadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) which says that nothing (on the outside) cuts off prayer. But then there is another which says that if a woman, or an ass or a dog crossed in front of a person in Salaah, the Salaat breaks. How are these statements reconciled?
Similarly there is a Hadeeth to the effect that should Salaah time come upon you and food he ready to be eaten, the meal should be taken first. But then there is another Hadeeth which says that Salaah should not be postponed for the sake of meals or anything else. What should be the correct line of action in this regard?

In brief there are numerous ordinances of Shariat, where for various reasons different commands were given. Hence one cannot be merely looking at the translation of the Quran or at any translation of some Hadeeth book or by having obtained a degree in Arabic, discover the reasons for those different ordinances. Those things are not enough to be able to ascertain to which Hadeeth preference should be given, or which preceeded which, or which of the various ordinances is the fundamental standing order and which was a temporary order through some special circumstances.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Three persons are a calamity for deen. An immortal jurist, (faqeeh) an unjust king (tyrant king) and and ignorant

mujtahid.” (Jami). The “ignorant mujtahid” is that person who has no knowledge and then out of his own reasoning passes opinions on matters of deen.

There is a grave warning in many reports of a Hadeeth wherein Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Whosoever utters any opinion of himself about the Quran (tafseer) should now already take his place in hell.”

Why differences In deen?

People who are conversant with deen often have a problem which they find difficult to solve or answer. The problem is this: In the physical sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, arithmetic etc. you do not see any differences of opinion. But how is it that in the religious sciences and theology there always seem to be differences of opinions, different viewpoints, different theories and explanations? From time immemorial till today there never has been any era when there were no differences in religion. The irreligious ones have taken this problem so seriously that they reached the stage where they point-blankly rejected religion itself as a reality, disbelieving in it completely. Others again have accepted religion itself, but denied theology (deeniyat) and adherence to deen. These people should have known, that according to their own admission (that there has always been dissent), this dissent is a natural phenomenon which is in itself quite necessary. Otherwise, how would it have been possible for it to exist continuously over thousands of years from era to era. We do not even know how many sages and philosophers, men of exceptional wisdom, have passed through its ways.

Now for the answer to this query. Actually, this objection against deen results primarily from not being well-conversant with deen. Basically there are two causes for dissent in deen. One pertains to differences in the basic fundamentals (usool) and the other concerns differences in the lesser, subdivisionals (furoo-i), of non-principle stature.

When religions differ in basic, fundamental, principle matters it is because of a specific reason. Deen is the name given to that institution of acting upon the commands and instructions of the Creator of the World. And for the Lord of the World it is true that He should set forth such orders and proclamations which are suitable and in the welfare of His creatures at any specific time. None can object to Him changing His orders from time to time. And neither can any stupid, fault-finding soul object that yesterday such-and-such a master commanded his servant to do this or that. And now the commands are altered. And why does He now give him other commands? Any ruler has the right to pass any law in the welfare and interests of his subjects, and later when circumstances alter, he has the right to bring about certain necessary changes.

In this same manner the Lord and Controller of the World also, for the various Ummahs in different eras have brought about certain amendments in his commandments which were suitable for the specific conditions that prevailed. But this was done while retaining the same fundamentals right through. Now in view of

these amendments and changes there was bound to be differences among the various religions.

Says the Quran:

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا
قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ

"Says the foolish ones among men: 'What has turned them away from the Qibla which they were observing. Say to them Mohammed, to Allah belongs the east and (he west. He guides whomsoever He wishes to the right path' "(2.142).

As the sole Master of the Universe, Allah has the right that for a Qibla for the Ummah he may fix any direction He wishes. No one has any right to ask him the cause for his actions. And so also Allah has enjoined various commands and ordinances for various religions throughout the ages. And for as long as those ordinances were in force it was obligatory to carry them out. When later other orders were given, those new ones became compulsory to be obeyed. So, this idea that there should be one set of regulations for all times is quite irrational.

لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً
وَاحِدَةً وَلَٰكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ

*"For every Ummat of you we have made a special Shariah Law and path. And if we had desired (to keep all on one path) we would have (Jews, Christians, Muslims), made you one Ummat. But that He may try you by that Shariah which He had given you. "(*V v 18)

Secondly the causes for dissent in religions on secondary, non-basic, non-fundamental matters (furoo-i) and minor details comes not so much from scriptural sources but from practical acts and passing events. This has been well explained by Shah Walyullah (Rahmatullah Alayh) in his book AlInsaaf, and I have given some detail about these in my discussion on the differences of opinion among the ulema.
From those passing events and incidents certain laws were deduced. It is natural that human beings differ in understanding from each other. Everyone has not the same power of understanding. The result is that because of the understanding and reasoning powers of various individuals, different conclusions were reached. But then it should be noted that the Shariat made this type of deduction (ijtihad) permissible if done under special regulations. So what cause for anxiety is there?

It is surprising that people daily tell their children: "You are still young and inexperienced to understand. When you are older you will surely come to understand."

Yet we consider ourself so perfect in understanding, perfect in intelligence and wisdom that we try to fully understand the Quranic verses which (Allah forbid) even Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) found inaccessible, and sO also the Saliabah (Radiallahu anhum). We claim to understand even better than the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) and Tabi-een even though we do not come near to these people

— not in the strength of Imaan, neither in correctness of action, nor in knowledge of the language of the Quran, nor in the light of intimacy with Allah. How can we ever think of comparing our intellectual prowess with the high position of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) which was even inaccessible for the rest of the Prophets?

Allama Ibn Jowzi enumerated in his book Talbees-i-Iblees all those ways in which shaytaan used human intelligence, understanding and their keeness for investigation to attack this Ummah. He firther proved that the human is able to acquire divine knowledge only in part and hence it is incumbent on him to refer to the Shariat. Otherwise they will land in the deep caverns of error and deviation from truth.

The discussion by Ibn Jowzi is quite an interesting one and well worth studying. Should you wish you will be well advised to read it.

Apart from all that has been said, there is another point to which attention should be given. ft is this: Whether the differences we have in opinion is of the praiseworthy type or the bad type, it is completely against Islamic teachings to exceed the bounds of decency and to deal with opponents in harsh and immoderate ways. The Quran states:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ اَنْ صَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ اَنْ تَعْتَدُوْا

“Allow not your hatred of people, who once prevented your entrance to the Holy Mosque to induce you to transgress beyond justice.” (5. 2)

Just think! In this we deal with opposition from among the idolators. Think how severe was their opposition to Islam! Yet in spite of that the Muslims are warned and prohibited from excesses and injustice in retaliation. What I am saying is not that there is no differences of opinion or that there are no differences in points of view on ma’saail, or that there are no points of dispute. These things have always been and always will be with us. The disputes are of both the praiseworthy as well as blameworthy types. But is there anything for which we do not have the opinions, actions and practice of our predecessors as a ray of guiding light? These differences should be kept within the limits of decency. If you wish to know the stories of mutual differences, then look up the disputes between the Sahabah (Radiallaht anhum). You will find that even in their fighting, they accomplished this teaching to the full. I now want to bring to your attention some of these incidents. But before I do that let me first point out one very important matter as a major guiding principle to bear in mind always.

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum)

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) were human and they also committed transgressions. In affairs of government and of state they also had differences and occassions arose when even battles were fought. Although these incidents are not befitting to their high esteem and elevated positions, they still serve as guiding

examples to us. And whatever incidents happened are for the Ummah, a path of action to follow and a pattern of action (if the Ummah should ever become involved in similar circumstances).

The fact to face is that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had the mission to impart practical teachings. This is the reason why a prophet is needed, namely to put into practice those teachings which had been revealed so that in later times none will have scope or opportunity to say that these commandments cannot be acted upon.

In this respect, with relation to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), teachings are of two kinds. One kind is that which is not below the dignity of Prophethood (and the appearance of which does not belie Prophethood). An example of this is Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) oversleeping for Fajr Salaah once (and probably twice or thrice). When this happens to be a Prophet, it does not deny his being a Prophet. It happened to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) even though some minor sufi Shaikhs or novices are such that they always wake up by themselves automatically and habitually. In fact they are such that they wake up by themselves for the Tahajjud night prayers.

Similarly there are some occasions when lapses occured in Salaah through forgetting something. In this respect Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) himself says;

إِنِّيْ لَاأَنْسٰى وَلٰكِنْ أُنَسّٰى لِأَسُنَّ

"I do not forget but lam made to forget so that Imay show the Sunnah way." (Muta Imam Maalik)

Secondly, there is that kind of laws for which practical instruction is needed, which would be completely contrary to the lofty position of a prophet to illustrate, for example, adultery, theft, etc. It is also necessary for the prophet to show the way of dealing with such cases in a practical manner, and to show the punishment for such crimes. Then also there was a need for a code of laws for those who rebelled against the state, how to run a state and how to take over the administration of a state.

Now if all these things occured in the lifetime of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and he had taken any line of action therein, it would have been such that, that line would have been the only way out to follow. There would have been no scope at all for dissent. For this reason it was necessary for these things to occur after the demise of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), so that the principles of both opposing parties come before us. So we may say that for those things, which were repugnant to the dignity of prophethood, the Sahabah offered themselves.

Hence those things which could occur during the lifetime of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) e.g. sinful acts (by people), happened in his lifetime. And those things which were difficult to occur during his lifetime, like disputes over control of the state, occured afterwards. Therefore in spite of those disputes and difference between them, we should indeed be thankful to those Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum)

because they showed the way for us and showed us the method of rule and administration, and the permissible type of opposition to the state etc.

Lofty examples of Sahabahs' (Radiallahu anhum) dissent

The Battle of Jamal was such a severe battle that according to Tareekh-alKhamees, twenty thousand men were killed. Just before the commencement of hostilities, Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) stepped in front of his soldiers and called Sayyidina Zubayr (Radiallahu anhu) from the opposing ranks. He too stepped forward. They embraced each other and wept. Then Ali (Radiallahu anhu) asked: "What is that thing that induced you to come to this place to engage me in battle?''
Zubayr (Radiallahu anhu) replied: "Revenge for the blood of Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) !"
For a time they continued the conversation. This was the behaviour of the two opponents, ready with drawn swords to fight it out to the end. (KitabulImaammati — wal — Siyaasah)

Thereafter the battle started. Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) was victorious and many of the opposing soldiers were taken as prisoners-of-war. Many of Au's (Radiallahu anhu) men insisted that the prisoners should be killed, but he did not agree with their views. On the contrary, he accepted oaths of allegiance from them and pardoned them. He declared their goods to be spoils of war but refused that they be made captives of war. His men argued that as their goods and possessions were declared spoils of war, their persons too should be captives. Initially Ali (Radiallahu anhu) refused but when his men insisted, he said: "Tell me, who of you is prepared to take as his share your mother, Aysha (Radiallahu anha), and make her your slave maid?" They exclaimed: "Nastaghfirullah! we seek pardon from Allah from such a thing."

Then Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said: "And I also seek Allah's pardon from such a thing."

Now I ask you, do we also protect the honour and respect of our opponents like that? Forget about taking up the sword and fighting. That is something else. In cases of minor differences of opinion are we worried about not attaching the honour and dignity of those who dispute with us as these people did even in battle?

Thereafter Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) saw the body of Muhammed bin Talha (Radiallahu anhu) laying. He exclaimed: "May Allah have mercy upon you. You were indeed a very devout person, staying awake at night in prayer, fasting continuously even at the times of greatest heat."

During the battle it so happened that the camel of Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha) was wounded, and fell. Au (Radiallahu anhu) said: "See whether the mother of the faithful has been wounded." (Tabari.

Sayyidah Aysha's (Radiallahu anha) brother Muhammed bin Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), fighting on Ali's (Radiallahu anhu) side, promptly went forward to inquire: "Have you been injured?"

Then Sayyldina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) himself came to the howdah upon the camel and said: "Dear mother, have you suffered any injury? May Allah pardon your fault."

She replied: "May Allah forgive your fault also." (Tabari)

This was how the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) dealt with an opponent! This was honour and respect for your adversary! What is our behaviour when we overcome an enemy? When we overcome any rival, is there anything of his life, weaith and honour to which we show any consideration?

The battle between Sayyidina Muawiya (Radiallahu anhu) and Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) is quite well-known. During the time when he was ruling Syria it happened that a person called Ibn Khaybari, seeing his wife was committing adultery, could not bear it and killed her. The case came before Muawiya (Radiallahu anhu). He could not reach a judgement, because for the murder of his wife, the killer's death is demanded in retaliation. However, the facts of the case were such that this was no ordinary murder and the facts could not be disregarded. Therefore he wrote a letter to Sayyidina Abu Moosa Ash-ary (Radiallahu anhu) asking him to consult with Sayyidina Ali (Radiallanu anhu) as regards the correct judgement. (Muta Imam Maalik).

Now I ask you: Do we ever think of admitting our ignorance before our political adversary? Do we ever think of asking our opponent about any mas'aail about which there is any dispute? No, with us, not a single word of our opponent is acceptable. Sometimes, not even the truth.
When Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) became Khalifa he took the oath of allegiance from the Muhajireen and Ansaar. A group of people did not swear allegiance, but he did not force them. Some people asked his opinion about those people. He said: "There people have refused to side with the truth, but have also refused to side with falsehood." (Khamees). How magnanimous of him! But today of anyone should prefer to remain neutral, what do we think of him? What we think of him and the attacks on him in the newspapers will be only to obvious. Need I go into detail?

Sayyidina Imam Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) was poisoned. When he was near to death they asked him: "Do you know who poisoned you?" He replied:
"By Allah, I will never disclose, who gave me poison to drink. If it is that person whom I think it is, then Allah's retaliation is sufficient. And if it is not him, then I do not want that an innocent person should be killed." (Khamees)

What would we have done? What do we do with that person with whom we have just a slight difference of opinion? With us he must be accused of being the cause of every affliction we suffer. It must be his evil plan. Even if someone else should cause us

any harm, then too in spite of knowing the truth, we will lay it at our opponents doorstep. Often in our heart of hearts we know him to be innocent, but such is the zeal for revenge that we will still blame him.

Let us go back to the Battle of Jamal. See how severe is the opposition between Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha). Actually the battle was between the two of them. Yet, when Imam Hasan (Radiallanu anhu), the son of All (Radiallahu anhu), was overcome after the poisoning, he sent his brother Hussain to Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha) with the request to be allowed to be buried near his grandfather, Rasuluflah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in her house. In spite of the fighting and all that went with it, Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha) granted this request. Later Sayyidina Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) told his brother Hussam (Radiallahu anhu): “Maybe she gave permission during the time while I am still alive out of shyness and shame and through consideration for my person. Seek permission from her once again after my death. If she gives permission gladly, then bury me there, otherwise bury me in the public graveyard of Madina.” On the demise of Sayyidina Hasan (Radiallahu anhu), Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) again sought permission and Sayyidah Aysha (Radiallahu anha) replied: “Yes indeed, and with great honour!”

Such then was the behaviour of the Muslim predecessors with those with whom they differed. Now see also what happened thereafter. The leaders of the Ummayyah clan would not allow the burial to take place there. They objected saying that as Sayyidina Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) had been refused burial there by his opponents. they would not allow Sayyidina Hasan (Radiallahu anhu) to be buried there.

In spite of that, when the body was brought into the Mosque for funeral prayers. Sayyidina Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) appointed the governor of Madina Saeed-bin-al-Aasi (of the Ummayyad clan) to lead the ftineral prayers, saying this was the Sunnat. (Khamees).

Will we also in our zeal for the Sunnat act like this to our opponents? For a simple minor thing we are quick to ban someone from our prayer-house, break away from the congregational prayers. These are daily occurances. If there are only one or two such incidents we can still relate them, but when there are hundreds of such incidents, how far can you go on counting?

So far we have related incidents between Muslims and Muslims. See now the behaviour of Muslims with non-Muslims. What unjust persecutions did not the Muslims suffer under the infidels of Mecca? What form of persecution, affliction, harm, humiliation and insults are there that they did not suffer at the hands of the kaafirs of Mecca? If you wish to see only a few examples, look up in “Stories of the Sahabah”. After all that, Mecca was finally fearing for himself, everyone remembering his own acts of evil. But from the holy mouth of Rasulullah (Sallailahu Alayhi Wasallam) comes the words:

لَاتَثْرِيْبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللهُ لَكُمْ

“No blame on you today. May Allah forgive you.” (Durr Manthoor)

At the battle of Badr after fighting valiantly, the kaafirs were beaten. Prisoners were taken. Have you seen how the prisoners were treated? Some were allowed to go free after paying a small ransom and some poor ones were allowed to go without any punishment. (Khamees). In fact the pages of history bear witness that in all the battles which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) fought the non-Muslims and prisoners were treated with such generosity as Muslims do not show to Muslims today. If among the Muslims any ordinary person, man, woman or slave gave protection to anyone, it was encumbent even upon the king or ruler to respect and honour the word of that person. But with us, even if the highest members of a nation should make a pact or agreement with anyone, you will find that the whole nation will be only too eager to pass a vote of no-confidence and censure against him.

At the time of the Conquest of Mecca, Sayyid.ah Umm Haani (Radiallahu anha), gave protection to someone from the family of her in-laws. Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) wanted to cancel and reject this. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “We have accepted this act of protection and have made it a rule that the granting of amnesty by the lowest of the law is valid.”

In the books of history, there is the story of Harmuzan who time and again committed treachery by breaking his pact and then seeking pardon. In the end Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) wanted to punish him with death for his repeated treachery. With a clever plan he set about seeking pardon. First he said that he was thirsty and wanted a drink before being put to death. When the water was brought he said he was afraid to drink lest he be killed before having finished his drink. Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said to him: “Do not fear, you will have amnesty and you will not be put to death until you have drunk the water.” Hearing this he threw out the water. Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) asked that water again be brought. Then he said: “You have given me amnesty till I drink the water. I will not drink the water. So you cannot kill me.” Umar (Radiallahu anhu) set him free.

In this case it was quite clear that if he did not drink the water the period of amnesty would cease. But because in the matter of giving amnesty and protection, these Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) were scrupulously careful, Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) accepted that amnesty had been granted. The high character of these noble ones can further be gauged from the letter which Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) wrote to Sa’ad (Radiallahu anhu), in which he said: “If any non-Arab foreigner even in jest or sportingly should utter such words which in their language denote amnesty or protection, then accept those statements as being tantamount to a request for a declaration of amnesty. For to make a mistake is giving of amnesty is useful, but to make a mistake in breach of pact is destruction. Such a mistake can be the cause of your weakness and the strength of your enemy.” (Ishaat)

Abu Lulu’, the assassin of Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) was a Christian slave. During Umar’s (Radiallahu anhu) life already he had indicated by threats that he

would kill him. In the end he actually assassinated him. Sayyidina Umar (Radiallahu anhu) said: “At that time he merely threatened to kill me.” But in spite of the threat, did the Calipha take any revenge? No, in fact Umar (Radiallahu anhu) still wanted to act generously with him as can be seen from historical events. Yet so great was his enmity to Umar (Radiallahu anhu) that when prisoners arrived from Nihavand, he used to put his hand on the head of each of them saying in hatred: “Umar has eaten up my liver.” (Revenge is called for) (Ishaat)

اَكَلَ عُمَرُ كَبِدِیْ

Ibn Muljam the killer of Sayyidina Au (Radiallahu anhu) once came to Au (Radhiallahu anhu) on some request. Au (Radiallahu anhu) gave him what he wanted. Then as he departed Au (Radiallahu anhu) said: “This man is my murderer.”
Someone asked: “Why do you not have him killed now?”

فَمَنْ يَقْتُلُنِیْ

Ali (Radiallahu anhu): “Then who will kill me?”

According to another report Ali (Radiallahu anhu) is reported to have replied: “He has not yet killed me (so how can the retaliation take place before the crime)”

When this man had attacked and mortally wounded Au (Radiallahu anhu), he was caught and brought forth: Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said: “Do not kill him now. Imprison him. Feed him well and give him a soft bed. If I should die, then kill him in retaliation, but jf I should survive, then I myself shall deal with him as I please. If Iso wish I may pardon him and if I so wish I may put him to death.” (Khamees)

وَأَطِيْبُوْا طَعَامَهُ وَأَلِيْنُوْا فِرَاشَهُ

How can one relate all such incidents in this brief resume. Books of history are full thereof. All I want to point out here is that the generosity which these saintly ones showed to their enemies and opponents, we do not show even to our near friends. And still we hope that by shouting the name of Islam, we shall attain the same fruitful results which they attained.

فَاِلَى اللهِ الْمُشْتَكٰى

Last Testamentary Advice

It was my wish to pen down some more useful things but the month of Ramadaan is quite near. In this month, let alone the writing of letters, even the reading of letters is quite an ordeal for me. Hence I now want to end this letter with a short discussion on another subject.

From all that has been written it should have been clear that all our troubles and problems spring from our neglect of Islamic teachings and our failure to implement Islamic tenets. This is because the success and progress of Muslims can only come about through confonning to Islamic teachings, nothing else.

And so I give you my final testamentary advice:

نصیحت گوش کن جاناں کہ از جاں دوست‌تر دارند جواناں سعادتمند پند پیر دانا را

Hearken dear one, for the fortunate young ones love the advice of the wise men more than they love their precious lives. (Hafiz Shirazi)

And thus I say: Whenever you see any prohibited act being performed, and you are in a position to stop it, then do not withhold yourself from stopping it. And where you are not in a position to prevent it, do not go about creating disputes, fights and quarrels. These two things are exceedingly important and quite delicate. Very often we err in the execution thereof. There are many cases where we definitely have the power to put an end to prohibited acts but fail to do so because of our relationship with the doers or because of friendship or because of love for children and friends. Then we prefer silence. This is wrong for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

من رأى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه فإن
لم يستطع فبقلبه وذلك أضعف الإيمان

"Whosoever among you see any prohibited deed, let him prevent it with his hands. And if he has not the power then let him change it with his tongue and if he has not the power, then let him change it with his heart. And that is the weakest grade of faith." (Muslim)

A man sees a sin committed and has the power to prevent it. It is his duty then to take hold of the sinners' hand and take him from there. And if he has the power over that person, he should exert force on him to prevent it. When he sees a prohibited act being committed, he should step in and in a practical manner stop the act.

If he has not that power, the least he should do is to speak out against it and verbally declare it to be not permissible. If he has not even the power to do that, he should consider it bad in his heart. This is the least that a person of faith can do. It is the lowest degree of Imaan. Another Hadeeth says: "There is no lower degree of Imaan beyond that." Now it stands to reason that if one does not even consider it a bad thing in his heart, it virtually means that he approves of it. What degree of Imaan is left in such a case? In this regard there is guidance from the Hadeeth:

أفضل الجهاد كلمة حق عند سلطان جائر

"The best form ofjihad is to speak the truth in the presence of a tyrant king."

It means then that seeing he is not able to change the evil deed with his hands, he speaks againstit so that perhaps some effect will be felt, or that at least the fact will have been emphasised that the deed is wrong. There is the possibility that someone might have looked upon this prohibited act as being permissible and now having come to know the truth, he may repent and amend his ways.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) says:

ما من رجل يكون في قوم يعمل فيهم بالمعاصي يقدرون على أن
يغيروا عليه ولا يغيرون إلا أصابهم الله بعقاب قبل أن يموتوا

"If a man residing in a community commits any sin, and the)', though able to prevent him, do not do so, Allah will involve them all in a punishment before they die. "(Abu Dawood)

What a harsh judgement against them! We see our children and young ones openly committing sinful acts. And we have all the means at our disposal of stopping them. Yet out of our love for them, because of negligence and indifference, we do nothing! This is definitely not acting in their interest or in their welfare, and is definitely not in our own interest. What we are actually doing is to cast ourselves and them into calamity. —

If today our children, wives, servants or relatives should cause us any financial loss, or do anything which impairs our dignity, we will go all out against them and will not even refrain from beating, abusing and scolding them. But on the other hand, if they do not perform Salaah, they gamble, shave off the beard and in fact are guilty of all manner of transgressions against the Shariat and Allah, and we, let alone beating them, do not even say anything against them!! At times we do not even in our heart consider these things to be wrong.

Should anyone guilty of crime against the state or any traitor or a murderer come to us, even if we do not say so openly, it is certain that in our hearts we will have fear and anxiety, and the thought will repeatedly rise in our minds: "This is a criminal. I too am in danger of being caught with him or be accussed of being an accessory or guilty of harbouring a criminal." But when a criminal aginst Allah, a traitor against Allah, and one disobedient to Allah comes to us, then let alone admonishing him, the idea does not even come in to our minds: "This is a criminal, I too am in danger of being caught with him or being accused with him for being an accessory, or of being affected by the misfortune of his disobedience."

In the Quran and Hadeeth we are repeatedly warned against this.

Just think whom we are dealing with! It is Allah, the Almighty Lord of this world and the hereafter, Who is Lord of all the kings and rulers! And yet, have we no fear for Him that openly we contravene His regulations? So why should calamities and anxieties not descend upon us?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى لَايُعَذِّبُ الْعَامَّةَ بِعَمَلِ الْخَاصَّةِ حَتَّى يَرَوُا الْمُنْكَرَ بَيْنَ
ظَهْرَانَيْهِمْ وَهُمْ قَادِرُوْنَ عَلَى اَنْ يُنْكِرُوْهُ فَلَايُنْكِرُوْا فَإِذَا فَعَلُوْا
ذٰلِكَ عَذَّبَ اللهُ الْعَامَّةَ وَالْخَاصَّةَ

"Allah does not punish the community generally for the sins of particular members until such time that they see evil committed among them which they are able to prevent and they do not prevent it. And when that happens, all are punished." (Mishkat)

I have written a special booklet on this issue called "Risala-e-Tableegh." What I am saying here is that when a man does not prevent any prohibited act while being able to do so, he is in fact opening the way for calamities to descend on him. This is the cause for many of the problems and anxieties which face the Muslims on all fronts today. This is also a major reason why today, on some religious matter, we attack some opponent by assassinating his character. And if that serves no purpose then seemingly for the sake of expressing the truth or for the sake of justice, we will procure fatwas against him and publish these. However, if it is a friend, relative or young fan, we will not do the same.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

إِذَا عَظَّمَتْ أُمَّتِيَ الدُّنْيَا نُزِعَتْ مِنْهَا هَيْبَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ وَإِذَا تَرَكَتِ
الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ حُرِمَتْ بَرَكَةَ الْوَحْيِ وَإِذَا
تَسَابَّتْ أُمَّتِيْ سَقَطَتْ مِنْ عَيْنِ اللهِ

"When my Ummah will begin to think much of this world, the respect of Islam will be taken from them. And when they will discard the ordering of good and the preventing from bad, they will be deprived of the blessings from revelation, And when they will abuse each other, they will fall in the 'eyes' of Allah."

According to another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:
"Two forms of intoxication will besiege you; intoxication with the love of this world and intoxication with ignorance. Then you will discard the enjoining towards good works and prohibiting evil. At that time those who hold fast onto the Quran and the Sunnah will be like the eminent among the Muhajireen and Ansaar." (Jami).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also said that the example of those who are staunch in observing the limits of Allah's commands and those who go beyond the limits (fall in sin) are like the travellers on a ship, wherein some are on the upper deck and some on the lower deck. Those of the lower deck repeatedly have to come to the upper deck to fetch water. And because of the ordeal of having to come up time and again, and because of the hindrance to those on the upper deck, they decide to make a hole in the ship to let water come in. If those on the upper deck do not prevent them, then because of the hole and the gushing in of water the whole ship will sink and all will be drowned. (Targheeb, Bukhari)

So one should understand that to refrain from preventing others from evil while being capable of doing so, not only causes the sinners to be punished, but causes punishment from Allah on yourself. It means you have to be prepared to face general punishment on all. These days there are many who consider themselves religious people and truly some of them are definitely very religious and devout persons. They consider themselves relieved of their responsibilities towards others. They have read this verse:

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

"Those who go astray will not harm you if you are guided aright." (5.105)

They look upon this verse as sufficient guarantee for them.

But may Allah shower millions of mercies on the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum). They did not allow any part of the deen to remain incomplete. Many of the Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) about this verse and its meaning.

In his reply to them as found in the tafseer of this verse Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: “Continue to enjoin good works and to prevent from evil. Otherwise you will face general punishment on all.”

اَمْر بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَنَهِى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرْ

Actually this verse alludes to that time when there is no power to prevent evil and when all doors of mischief are opened.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu), once stood on the mimbar and recited this verse and said: “You people recite this verse out of context and inappropriately. I myself have heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) saying: ‘Those who see evil and do not prevent it, will very soon be facing severe punishment.”

Once Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) was sitting while two persons were having an argument. One of those sitting there wanted to get up and stop them but another prevented him, reciting this verse: “Those who go astray will not harm you, if you are guided aright.” Abdillah bin Masood (Radiallahu anhu) admonished him and said: “The time for (the application of) this verse has not yet come.” (Durr Manthoor)

In short, where a person has the power to stop evil, it is of the utmost necessity to do so. Now, on the other hand, where one has not the power to prevent and there is a strong possibility of trouble and the fear of definite religious harm, do not unnecessarily throw challenges. In such cases stay aloof. And if because of your staying aloof people should scold you, abuse you, revile and taunt you, then bear it all with patience. Pray for those who abuse you:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِ قَوْمِىْ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَايَعْلَمُوْنَ

“*0 Allah guide my people for they know not what they do...*”

What a wonderful teaching of Rasulu1la (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)! If this is not possible then too in any case keep yourself aloof from quarrels. To guard yourself instead of trying to repair (in such cases) is also a blessing.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

اِذَا رَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ قَدْ مَرَجَتْ عُهُوْدُهُمْ وَخَفَّتْ اَمَانَاتُهُمْ وَكَانُوْا
هٰكَذَا وَشَبَّكَ بَيْنَ اَنَامِلِهِ فَالْزَمْ بَيْتَكَ وَامْلِكْ عَلَيْكَ لِسَانَكَ وَخُذْ
مَا تَعْرِفُ وَدَعْ مَا تُنْكِرُ وَعَلَيْكَ بِخَاصَّةِ اَمْرِ نَفْسِكَ وَدَعْ عَنْكَ اَمْرَ الْعَامَّةِ

“When you see that the agreements of men have become confused, and trusts have become to be considered lightly, and (crossing his fingers of the one hand into the

other) you see people becoming mixed like this (mixing right and wrong, good and bad, without distinguishing between them) then remain seated in your home, keep your tongue silent, choose to do permissible acts, avoid the prohibited, guard yourself and avoid the public masses of people."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) warned: "Very near is the time when the best possessions of a person will be a few goats which he will take to the tops of mountains and to such places where the rains will fall and where he will continue to flee to safeguard his faith from evils." (Bukhari)

Allama Amy (Rahmatullah Alayh) writes in his commentary on Sahih Bukhari that from this Hadeeth is proved the virtue of staying aloof from men at the time of mischief. But as for that person who has power and ability to prevent evil and mischief, for him it is compulsory to endeavor to prevent those evils. According to the circumstances this becomes either an obligatory duty (fard-ayn) or a public duty (fard kifayah). If there is no one else to prevent the act, it is a fard-ayn, and if there are others who can also perform this task it becomes a fard kifayah.

Excluding yourself from gatherings

Now if it is not a time when mischief and evil had become widespread, what is better; to lead a life of seclusion away from people or to mix freely with them? Imam Nawawi (Rahamtullah Alayh) says that according to Imam Shafi (Rahmatullah Alayh) and many other Ulema, the better of the two is to mix with people because by associationg with men, many religious benefits are derived and one has the opportunity of participating in numerous Islamic practices. By living collectively in congregation the great number of the Muslim multitude of people is illustrated. Similarly the person with free association with the crowd is able to do much good and prohibiting the bad, helping others in the spread of deeds of piety and righteousness, helping the needy, attending the congregations of the Muslims and so many other deeds.

As for that person who is an Aiim or a pious righteous man, on him it is even more strongly recommended that he should freely associate with people.

However there is another party among the learned who believe that in spite of all the above benefits and advantages, seclusion and staying aloof from people is better. They say that in this a person is sure to be safe from evil. But there is one condition attached to this and that is that this person applies himself diligently to the Ibaadah compulsory on him, and on condition that he be acquainted with those things which are incumbent on him. Imam Nawawi (Radiallahu anhu) says: "The most preferable view is this that only when a person has a strong presumption that he would not be involved in sin, is it better to mix and associate with people."

Allama Kirinani (Rahinatullah Alayh) says: “In our times it is preferable to seclude yourself, and to remain in solitude, because (nowadays) it is very seldom that any gathering is devoid of sinful acts.”

Allama Amy (Rahmatullah Alayh) says: “I am also in agreement with Kirmani because in these times nothing is derived from gathering except sin.”

Irnam Nawawi (Rahmatullah Alayh) passed away in the year 676 Hijri and Allama Kirmani (Rhmatullah Alayh) died in 786 Hijri. In a period of merely one hundred years times had changed so much that Imam Nawawi prefers mixing with people to be better and Allama Kirmani, 100 years later says that seclusion and solitude is better. Aliama Amy died in 755 Hijri and he concurs whole-heartedly with Kirmani while explaining the upsurge in evil all round.

We are now in the second half of the 14th Century and one can only imagine how many more evils have arisen around us. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Every era that dawns will exceed the era before it in evil.”

He is also reported to have said: “You shall continue to enjoin the doing of good and continue to prohibit the doing of evil. However when you see stinginess being obeyed, and carnal desires being followed, and the world being preferred (over deed), and every man becomes infatuated with his own opinion, and you see such a state of affairs that there is no other way (except silence), then guard yourself (to avoid being involved in trouble) and cut of intercourse with the people. Soon a time will come when to hold onto your religion will be like holding onto live burning coals.” (Mishkat)

A time will come when just as difficult as it is to hold live burning coals in your hand with patience, so difficult will it be to remain steadfast on your deen. Now, every religious minded person, every religiously conscious one knows how difficult it is to spread true religious teachings, to draw attention to deen and even to act according to deen.

Look at the most important tenet of Islam, which, after Imaan, is the most weighty thing - Salaah. See how difficult it has become to command those high ranking nobles among the Muslims, the wealthy ones, those people who are looked upon as the standard-bearers of Islam and its leaders - to perform Salaah! See how difficult it has become to persuade them to attend the Mosque for Salaah and to observe the prayer with Jamaat. It is more difficult than to tell the ordinary Muslim in the street. It almost seems that he who does the preaching and persuading to induce others to attend the prayers is doing so for his own good, for some vested interest. And it seems as if those who are preached to, are deriving no benefit therefrom.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “My example is like that of a person who lighted a fire. Moths flock to the light and fall upon it and he chases them away so that they do not become unnecessarily burnt. But they do not go away and burn in

the fire. Such is my example. I come to grab you away from the fire of hell but you continue to rush into it." (Mishkat)

In this manner it is the duty of the Ulema to continue to strive and prevent people from evil. But if in the end they are overcome or fear any danger, then it is better to remain in solitude and seclusion away from mischief.

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) says: "I heard Hajjaaj, (the great tyrant) uttering some illegal things in a sermon. The thought came into me that I should attack him, but then I remembered a saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and I remained silent. That saying of Rasulullah (Sallailahu Alayhi Wasallam) is this: "It does not befit a believer to humiliate himself." I then asked: "0 Rasul of Allah, how will a man humiliate himself?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasailam) replied: "To enter himself into such a difficulty which he will not be able to bear."

Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) also reported this Hadeeth: "It is not for a Muslim to degrade himself." The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) inquired: "How does a Muslim degrade himself?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "To go into such a calamity which he is not able to bear." (Majma-ul-zawaaid)
When the battle between Sayyidina Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Muawiya (Radiallahu anhu) took place Sayyidin Saad bin Abi Waqqas (Radiallahu anhu), one of the most eminent Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) ,mounted his camel and fled into the wilderness. His son Umar (Radiallahu anhu) went to visit him there and as he saw the son approaching him he prayed:

"0 Allah I seek refi1ge in thee from the evil of the rider."
The son dismounted and said to his father: " how is that you have taken your camel and goats and came here, leaving people to fight over the state?"

Sayyidina Saad (Radiallahu anhu) struck the son forcefully upon the chest said: with his hand and said: "Be quiet. I myself have heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) say: Allah loves that person who is Godfearing and pious, and remains hidden." (Targheeb, Muslim)

Once asululIah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked: "Shall I inform you who is the best persons?"

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) replied: "Yes, do tell us."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "It is that person who holding onto the reins of his horse while strives in the path of Allah until such time that he dies or is martyred."

“Shall I tell you who is the next best after him?”

The Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum) replied: “Yes, do tell us!”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “It is that person who goes to settle in seclusion in a mountain cavern all alone, perfonns his Salaah, gives his Zakaat and is saved from the evils of men.”

According to another Hadeeth: “How fortunate and good is that man who keeps his tongue under control, remains secluded in his house and continues to cry over his sins.”

Sayyidina Uqbah (Radiallahu anhum) says: “I once asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) what was the way towards salvation.”

He replied: “Keep control over your tongue,, remain inside your home and continue to cry over your sins in repentance.

In all these things there is one thing we must stress once again. It is this when any prohibited impermissible thing is seen one should dislike it and consider it bad. One should feel sorrow at its appearance. Such evil should be intensely resented. This is that which in the first Hadeeth quoted has been called the lowest grade of Imaan.

There is a Hadeeth which says that Allah commanded Jibreel (Alayhis Salaam) to destroy a certain town and its people. Jibreel (Alayhis Salaam) said: “0 Allah, in that town there is such-and-such a devout servant of yours, who has never ever disobeyed you.”
Allah said: “Destroy that town in spite of him because never once did a wrinkle appear on his face on account of (the displeasure at the sins committed against Me.” (Mishkat)

In other words, he has continued to look on while my laws were disobeyed and never once showed any dislike and resentment.

In another Hadeeth Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: “Whosoever joins in the doing of a impermissible act while he resents it (and only does so because of force of circumstances) shall be as one who never joined in the act. And whosoever does not join in such an act but likes it, is like one who participated in it.” (Majma-ul-Zawaaid)

It is indeed a very dangerous thing to be pleased with any sinful thing, no matter in whom it be found. And the root of all sin is kufr. How much more dangerous is it not to be pleased with kufr?

Hazrat Mujaddid Alfi Thani wrote a very frightening story in his Makaateed (epistles), with a strong lesson for us. He says that he once went to visit a very sick man. When he came there he found the man very near death. “1 concentrated my spiritual attention on him and found that his heart was filled with darkness. Again I focused my spiritual attention on his heart for a long time in order to drive off the darkness, but the darkness

had been created as a result of friendship with the kaafirs. This will not be dispelled by spiritual attention. It will only be removed by the fire of hell." (Maktoob vol. par V)

What a frightening lesson! It shows that some impurities cannot even be removed through the focus of spiritual attention of the saints of Allah!

In a "weak" Hadeeth it is said: "Acquire nearness to Allah through hatred for sinners. Meet them roughly and seek the pleasure of Allah by being displeased with them and attain nearness to Allah by remaining aloof from them." (Jami — us — Sagheer)

This Hadeeth is supposedly weak as far as its chain of narrators is concerned. But the contents are corroborated by other Hadeeth. Azeezi wrote that it means that one should hate the sin and not the person of the sinner. This is also the meaning of all those Hadeeth wherein the contents are similar to this one. One should hate and resent the sin so that because of the love we have for someone or our special relationship with him; one does not look upon his evil deed as being something light and minor. On the other hand the sin that is committed by him should not make us disregard the quality of Islam which lies in him. In this way there is a medium way between the two extremes (hatred for him and unqualified love). This alone is the way in which we can keep all that we have been commanded to do, in its proper place.

In truth the teachings of Islam were such that it brought about a picture, true to the description of the Quran:

يَدْخُلُونَ فِيْ دِيْنِ اللهِ أَفْوَاجًا

"And you will see them entering the fold of Allah's religion in groups." (CX v 2)

But we have turned our faces away from it. And apart from not only acting upon them, we are not even enthusiastic enough to learn those teachings. It is the punishment for these shortcomings which we are suffering nowadays.

Our example is like that of an ostrich. When it is asked to fly, it says that it is a camel. How can a camel be asked to fly? And when it is asked to carry loads, it says that it is a bird. How can a bird be expected to carry loads?

So are we. When we are called upon to carry out the orders of religion and act upon it, we say: "We are people living in this 14th Century. We are weak and ineffective. How can it be expected of us to emulate the .deeds of the noble Sahabah (Radiallahu anhum)? They were strong and sturdy people. They were people of the good early days of Islam who were fortunate to have sat at the feet of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and enjoyed his blessed company. How can we ever come near to them in action?"

But when mention is made of their grand accomplishments, their conquests of lands and kingdoms, their progress and advances on all fronts, and when mention is made of the respect honour and high rank they enjoyed, we exclaim: "We too are Muslims, followers of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), successors to the Sahabah (Radiallahu

anhum).” Then we too dream about equality with them. But the truth of the matter is that such dreams do not lend themselves to sound interpretations.

If at all we wish for those same days of progress, conquest and advancement, it will only be achieved through doing the same acts and sacrifices they did. How can one sow beans and hope to reap a good crop of apples. This is sheer foolishness.

And now the time is up. The time for the sighting of the new moon is near. Pray to Allah that He give this humble slave to follow some part of the pattern and example set by those saintly elders and predecessors. I am like that blind man holding a lamp in his hand and says to others: “Come take advantage of this light and derive benefit therefrom “while, he, the blind man himself is deprived of gaining any benefit.

In my humble opinion all that has been written will be sufficient to provide answers to most of the difficulties and problems in a concise manner. And I hope that all the matters under discussion would have been clearly and adequately answered. But remember, these are my own humble and imperfect thoughts. It does not mean that everyone must accept eveything I say: If my thoughts are found to make sense, then accept. Otherwise look upon it as the unacceptable fruits from my pen.

وَمَا اسْتَقَمْتُ فَمَاقَوْلِيْ لَكَ اسْتَقِمْ

“And my help comes only from Allah.”

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ ظُلْمًا كَثِيْرًا وَّلَايَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ فَاغْفِرْلِيْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِكَ وَارْحَمْنِيْ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ، وَ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالٰى عَلٰى اَفْضَلِ خَلْقِهٖ سَيِّدِ الْبَشَرِ وَعَلٰى آلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَاَتْبَاعِهٖ وَاَتْبَاعِهِمْ حَمَلَةِ الدِّيْنِ الْمَتِيْنِ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَاَارْحَمَ الرّٰاحِمِيْنَ

“0 Allah, I have been grossly unjust to my own soul, and there is none to forgive sins except Thee. Forgive me with a special forgiveness from Thee and have Mercy on me. Verily Thou art the Forgiver, the Merciful.”

And lastly may Allah‘s choicest blessings descend upon the most virtous of His creation, the Leader of mankind, and upon his family, his companions, their followers and their followers and upon all those bearers of the Deen, through Thy Mercy 0 Most Merciful of all Merciful Ones.

Yours faithfully,
Zakariyya Kandhlawy.
29 Shabaan 1357